

# Historical Outlines on LITHUANIA

By Joseph J. Hertmanowicz

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PART I  
The Republic of Lithuania

PART II  
Ancient Lithuania

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Illustrated by Photographic Plates and Map

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## Foreword.

Of all the nations that were absorbed by the late Russian empire but, during the World's War re-established independent, sovereign states, the Lithuanian nation occupies the most interesting and notable place.

First of all, the Lithuanians are the oldest of all the European nations, credited with being the primitive type of the Aryan race. They have preserved the primitive Aryan speech unpoluted and uncorrupted. Along with these racial characteristics, Lithuanians have occupied the regions constituting the territory of the present Republic of Lithuania, long before any other European nation came into being, and they have maintained the possession of same, uninterruptedly, to this day.

During the latter part of the ninth century the Russian Slavs and the Poles opened a campaign of aggression against Lithuanians, which brought Germans into play as their allies. Lithuania defeated both, the Russian Slavs and the Poles, and checked the Teutons. Then, in 1568, Livonian Teutons came under the sovereignty of Lithuania, while the Teutonic Crusaders, in Parusnia, formed Teutonic Prussia, which remained in possession of the Lithuanian lands, between the rivers Vistula and Niemen. The Poles, being defeated by Lithuanians, resorted to trickery; and, under the cover of an alliance, extended their policy over Lithuania. The Polish regime ended in the downfall of both Lithuania and Poland; and Poland, being divided between Austria, Prussia and Russia, left Lithuania in the possession of Russia and Prussia.

In such state Lithuania remained until the Teutons occupied Poland and Lithuania in 1915. In 1918, Poland and Lithuania struck for independence. Lithuania won her independence by her own efforts, while Poland was aided by the entente allies, and is the creation of the treaty of Versailles. The relations between Lithuania and Poland became strained from the time Poland recovered her independence and came to possession of a powerful army, which embarked on the enterprise of conquests. By force of arms, Poles have occupied Eastern Galicia, which is Ruthenian; by same means Poles have occupied part of White Russia and Lithuanian territory; while by the decree of entente allies they won part of Pomarania, which is not and has never been Polish. Thus, about twenty millions of Poles have built a state with about thirty-five millions of population.

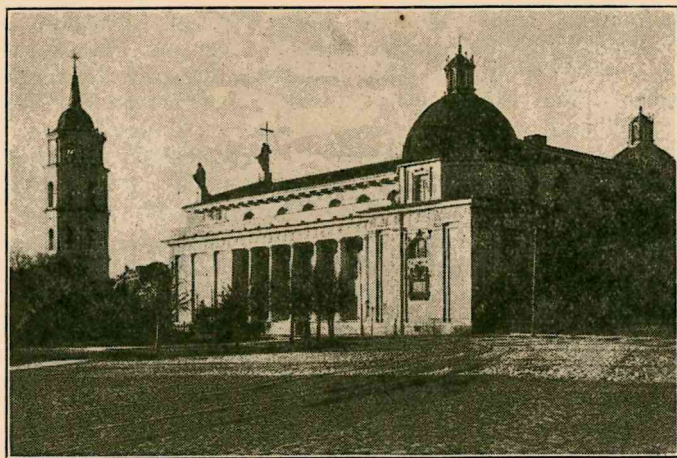
Polish aggression, supported by France, became the sole menace to Lithuania. How persistent is the Polish military imperialism, we can now judge from what has happened in Upper Silesia after the plebiscite, pending the decision of the League of Nations. With such a foe Lithuania has now to deal in her efforts to recover its capital, Vilna, along with the territory of Vilna, Grodna and Souvalki.

This historical sketch on Lithuania will enable one to judge the situation in its true light. Of necessity, these outlines are confined to the most important events, having a direct bearing on the fate of Lithuania. Complete histories of Lithuania have been written by Simonas Daukantas, and other historians. Besides the Lithuanian language, historical data

on Lithuania is found in Russian, Polish and German. In English, to my knowledge, these outlines, will give the most complete chain of events. For this reason, I hope, this little booklet will find a welcome greeting by the English speaking world.

JOSEPH J. HERTMANOWICZ.

Chicago, Ill.  
May 9, 1921.



(2) VILNA, VYTAUTAS CATHEDRAL, AND THE BELFRY which was once a tower of the TEMPLE OF PERKUNAS, destroyed in A. D. 1387, by the advent of Christianity in Lithuania.



# The Republic of Lithuania

## Part I

### I. DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

**F**EBRUARY 16, 1918, will occupy in the heart of the Lithuanian nation the same warm place that July 4, 1776, has won in the heart of the American nation. These dates will live forever, marked with the Declaration of Independence, of the two respective nations.

There is a marked distinction between the two Declarations of Independence, herein considered. The American colonies based their claim to independence on moral and ethical grounds alone. The background of the American sentiment was composed of economical and political considerations. The colonies occupied a territory disputed by the natives, who possessed an undisputable title, by the right of priority of occupation and possession. American colonists, in the eyes of the native Indians, were foreigners. The distinction between the American colonists and their central government, located in London, existed only in the form of conception of human rights. This conception alone gave the weight of validity to the Declaration of Independence of these American colonies. Thus, the basis for the American Declaration of Independence, of July 4, 1776, is found in the American conception that every people has an inherent right to shape its own destiny. Because of this conception, and the determination, resulting from it, to establish in this great land a government of the people, by the people and for the people, now a hundred million of people from all parts of the earth enjoy liberty, freedom, and happiness.

The identical conception of human rights to self-determination, was ever present in the Lithuanian mind. This conception of the inalienability of human rights to freedom, liberty, independence and the pursuits of happiness, was grounded in the glorious traditions of the Lithuanian nation. Hence, the Declaration of Independence of Lithuania, February 16, 1918, in its ancient capital, Vilna, was associated with all the moral weight attending the American Declaration, strengthened by the circumstance, that, the Lithuanians advanced the claim to self-determination in the lands, undisputably Lithuanian, wherein no other people or nation had a valid title to sovereign rights, save the title of brutal force.

### 2. SITUATION CALLING FOR DECLARATION.

**A**MERICAN entry into the world war, and the American declaration of the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world, created a situation in the world, which called for the voice of many peoples in the matter of their choice of sovereignty.

The American influence on the outcome of the war, created in the mind of mankind the impression, that, the time of rule by means of brutal force is past. The whole world realized that the time of the right of conquest is past, and, that, the victors themselves must consult the vanquished in the matter of their choice of allegiance.

Germany, which on February 16, 1918, occupied entire Lithuania, realized the change in the world's conception of the peoples' rights,



desired to create an impression of her adherence to the Monroe doctrine for the world; and, guided by her own vital interests, proclaimed the independence of many peoples under her control, at the same time safeguarding German interests in these lands, by proposing a close federation of these states with the German empire.

Such an arrangement offered many advantages to the peoples concerned, over their former status. Germany believed, that, by such a move, she would win all these peoples for her policies; and, for this reason, desired that such peoples hold national conventions, and there declare their satisfaction with the German policies. The German declaration made all these small states dependents of Germany, enjoying great and liberal autonomy in local affairs. Sovereign rights, however, were reserved by Germany.

The Lithuanian national convention, which assembled in Vilna, on February 16, 1918, was a representative body. Its voice was the voice of the people. Germany felt assured, that the result of that national convention would be favorable to German policies, owing to the German occupation of Lithuania, the total indifference of the allied powers to the fate of Lithuania, as well as Lithuanian unpreparedness to the formation of an independent state, and its ultimate defense.

All these calculations did not take into account the determined will of the Lithuanian people—to be absolutely free and independent. This will asserted itself when the committee on resolutions formulated the act of the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence, which at once blasted all the fond hopes of Germany, and served a notice to the world of the resurrection of the Lithuanian republic.

When the Declaration of Lithuanian independence was pronounced by this representative assembly, Lithuania became a political entity, recognizing no foreign sovereignty, not even that of the former Russian empire, and this resurrected state was placed under the jurisdiction of the sovereignty of the Lithuanian people.

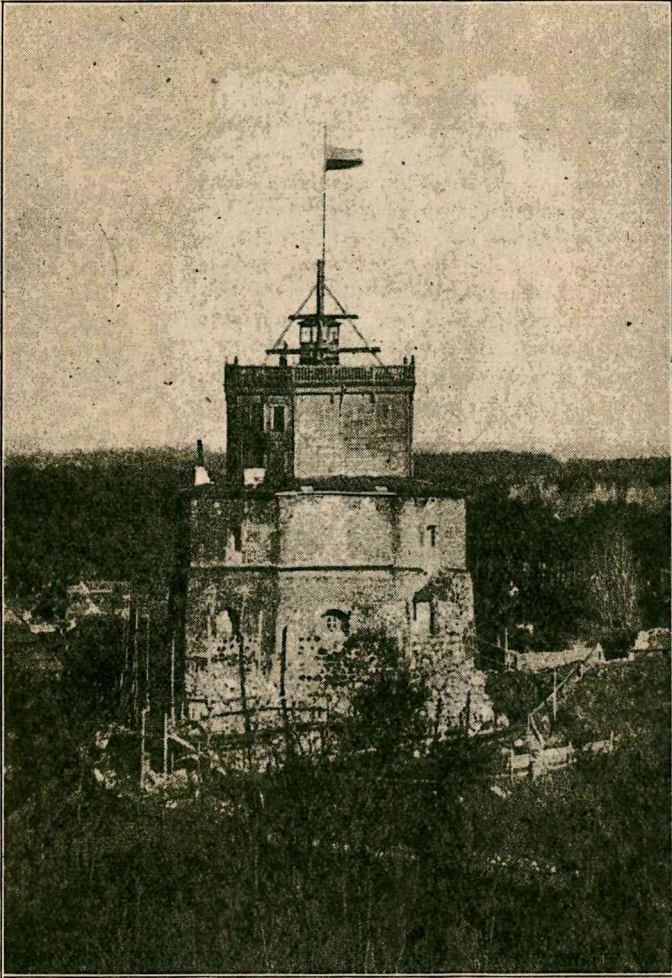
### 3. FORMATION OF THE LITHUANIAN STATE.

THE promulgation of the Declaration of Independence imposed upon the Lithuanian national assembly the duty of forming an independent government and the creation of the entire governmental machinery.

It was no light task for a people whose country had remained under foreign rule for over 125 years. The world war had taken a big toll of life of its youth. Many prominent Lithuanians were driven out of the country. Some remained in Russia, some in German prisoners camps; others, for a long time, were scattered all the world over.

The country itself, visited by the repeated waives of military operations of the Russo-Teutonic forces, was in ruins. Above all, the whole country remained under the military control and occupation of the powerful German empire.

Allied and associated powers engaged in deadly grips with Teutonic forces on all fronts, to save France and Belgium, were not in a position to lend any assistance to the Lithuanian aspirations. Besides, no inclination on their part to re-instate the Lithuanian state, was ever evinced by the allied and associated powers. This circumstance left Lithuanians to their own resources.



(1) Flag of the Republic of Lithuania (A. D. 1920) flying on the Castle of Gediminas (built in about A. D. 1320) in Vilna, Capital of Lithuania.



Realizing fully the responsibility for the future destinies of the nation, the Lithuanian national assembly proceeded at once to form a provisional government, composed of the Taryba (National Council), and the cabinet of ministers appointed by the assembly, headed by prime minister, with the executive powers vested in the president of the state of Lithuania.

Once such a government was appointed by the national assembly, the question arose concerning the transfer of authority from German occupational forces to the government of Lithuania.

#### 4. TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY.

GERMAN authority was reluctant to withdraw from Lithuania, on the basis of a recognition of the absolute sovereignty of the Lithuanian government. The Lithuanian government realized fully, that the first thing to be done in the premises was to organize national defenses. This implied raising an army, with all that it implied.

At the same time, this original, provisional Lithuanian government existed in name only. It lacked treasury, and the personnel for the intricate governmental machinery. The heads of various departments, given title of ministers, had to rely on their own resourcefulness for calling to life their various branches of the government.

Few expected that, the Lithuanian people, deprived of the right to participate in the government of the country by the old Russian regime, could rise to the height of the builders of the state. This, however, took place.

The government issued a proclamation to the people to contribute to the success of the Lithuanian state, by an immediate answer to the call for funds and volunteers for the formation of the new Lithuanian army. The response from the people was prompt. In a comparatively short time, Lithuania organized the principal branches of government, and formed a nucleus of the army.

#### 5. SUPREME TEST OF AUTHORITY.

AS soon as the Lithuanian government was completed, it filed a demand with the German authorities to withdraw. By that time the German occupation forces discovered the presence of Lithuanian military forces covering the entire country. Self-interests demanded that Germany abide by the will of the Lithuanian people, and the German authorities began to withdraw their troops from Lithuania.

While official Germany abided by the will of the Lithuanian people to govern themselves, detachments of the Germany army, either inspired by Berlin, or acting on their own initiative, or otherwise, refused to leave Lithuania. Then there appeared an army of Bermond-Avaloff-Verkolic, representing the interests of Germany and of Russia, which challenged the authority of the Lithuanian government, and demanded resignation of that government in the interests they represented.

Several regiments of these foreign forces, well trained, equipped and experienced in the warfare during the world war, confronted the Lithuanian state with the menace of an armed strife.

The Lithuanian army was very small, and poorly equipped and provisioned. It seemed no match to the veterans of the great world strife. However, the Lithuanian government immediately organized a volunteer army of "Sharp-Shooters" (Shauliai), who at once initiated a guerrilla

warfare. The organization of these "sharpshooters" covered the entire country. This Lithuanian defense force soon came to clash with the Bermond-Avaloff-Verkolich forces and, in several bloody engagements, defeated them completely, sweeping the country clear of these enemies.

In the meantime another menace began to loom up in the form of "bolshivist" invasion, supported by the restless element at home. In the supreme test the Lithuanian defense forces came out victorious and, clearing out the enemies from Lithuania, finally came to an understanding with the government of Moscow, and ultimately concluded a treaty, by virtue of which Russia recognized the complete independence of Lithuania, and defined the borders between Lithuania and Russia.

Emerging from the stormy beginning of its new national career, the Lithuanian republic had bright prospects of a peaceful and prosperous future, when, all of a sudden, the Polish general, Zeligowski, invaded Lithuania, captured the Lithuanian capital, Vilna, and compelled this youthful state to resume the state of war, in which Lithuania remains to this day.

#### 6. ECONOMICAL PROBLEMS.

LITHUANIA is an agricultural country. Its climate corresponds to that of our State of Wisconsin or Michigan. Its principal crops are: Wheat, Rye, Barley, Oats, Potatoes, Peas, Beans, Flax, Hemp, and all sorts of vegetables. It raises bountiful crops of fruits of all kinds, and abounds in berries of every kind, especially Raspberries, Strawberries.

Lithuania has a very rich black soil. In some regions there is much sand. The country is generally level, irrigated by numerous rivers and streams, full of fishes. Some of the rivers are navigable. There are also plenty of small and large lakes and ponds.

Besides raising crops, Lithuania is great for raising cattle. It may be regarded one of the best dairy countries in Europe. Sheep raising supplies Lithuania with wool, sufficient for domestic use, with plenty left for export.

The world war devastated Lithuania to practically the same extent as Belgium. Yet, while Northern France and Belgium received outside help, and since the Armistice, Nov. 11, 1918, has enjoyed perfect peace, Lithuania to this day remains in a state of war, a condition thrust upon it by its enemies—and it has been left to defend itself without assistance from any outside source.

The invasion of Lithuania, by Polish armies under Zeligowski, necessitated the mobilization of all its man power for national defense. This circumstance affected Lithuanian economic status very detrimentally; first, because it compelled the nation to take away its youth from farms and keep them under arms; and, second, because the maintenance of an army necessitated extraordinary expenditures, which otherwise could have been utilized for development of the natural resources of the country, tending to produce prosperity and happiness.

However, despite these extraordinary conditions, Lithuania had satisfactorily solved its economical problems in this wise: It had reduced its standing army to a minimum consistent with its economical power, depending for defense of the country on an army of volunteers. Two military organizations of Lithuanian volunteers: the Sharpshooters (Shauliai), and the Iron Wolf (Gelezinis Vilkas), comprise the entire Lithuanian youth from 15 years of age upward. These folks stay at



home and devote their time to peaceful pursuits of life. Each of them has arms and ammunition at home, and the net of training camps, covering the entire country, keeps them fit for military service at all times. These volunteers pay, from their own funds, for the arms and munitions, as well as all other military equipment. They are, in fact, what we would call "a citizenry trained to arms."

By these means, the youthful state of Lithuania, which was devastated by the world war; whose moneys were carried away by the retreating Russian imperial bureaucracy; which has received no outside help either during the world war or since; which was cut out from all calculations of reparations claimed by all other participants in the allied victory from the vanquished foe; which has no gold mines, no coal mines, no iron ore mines, no oil fields, and no other such natural treasures as are bestowed by nature upon other victors; whose industry has never been developed; and which is regarded by the great powers of the world, as a country unable to maintain itself and to preserve its freedom, liberty and independence,—stands today the sustainer of her own people and the feeder of her immediate neighbors.

Lithuanian crops are being exported to foreign lands, and help other nations to preserve their lives. Lithuanian farmers have both food and money. They have no luxuries of any kind; but, what is necessary for keeping men alive, strong and healthy, they have plenty. They are all happy.

The greatest economical problem of the Lithuanians today is the reduction of military expenditures. Were it possible to secure a peaceful settlement of all difficulties with Poland; and were it possible to have the Polish armies withdraw from the Lithuanian territories, without armed strife, Lithuania would at once become the soundest economical unit in the whole world.

#### 7. INDUSTRIAL PROBLEMS.

THE traditional policy of the Lithuanian nation, to produce and to finish all necessities of life with her own hands, has persisted to this day. This, of course, applies only to country people, the peasantry. Town folks and the nobility are generally excluded from this rule.

Owing to this traditional policy, practically all farming implements, tools, houses, furniture, and means of transportation, were products of Lithuanian handcraft. Linen and woolen goods for clothing were products of the Lithuanian women. Lithuanian women took great pride in their ability to produce fine linens and woolens; and, up to most recent times, Lithuanian country folks held in contempt all those who clothed themselves in imported or machine produced goods.

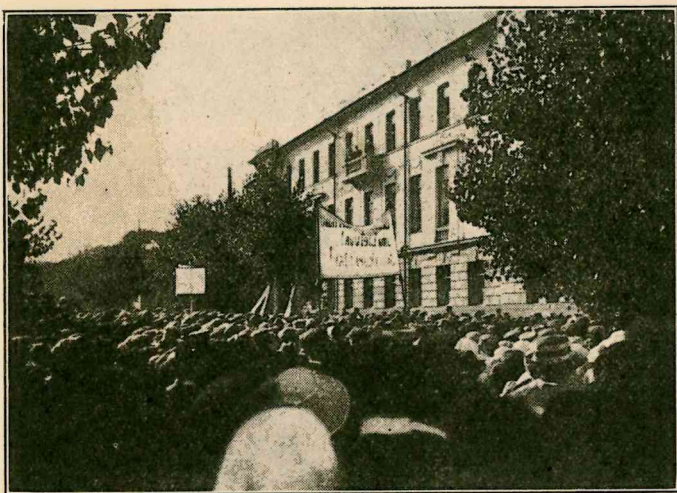
This handicraft of the Lithuanian people was found very helpful in the problem of reconstruction of the country, devastated by the world war. Were it not for this national ability to produce all necessities of life independently of factories or foreign help, Lithuania would find itself in much greater plight than is now France or Belgium. These latter countries depend on reparations to be exacted from vanquished foe for rebuilding their country, and placing their industry on a sound basis. To this end they have the support of all the allied and associated powers, and have a powerful army for the invasion of the vanquished enemies' lands. Lithuania has had no such assistance. Therefore, it had to depend solely

upon its own ability to meet the problems as best it could. The problems were thus met and happily solved.

The time has come, however, when the development of natural resources, limited as they are, requires the adoption of the industrial system of modern countries. Lack of labor, caused by large Lithuanian emigration, especially to the United States of America, made the manpower more costly than the machine power. This condition alone directed the attention of the Lithuanian people toward development of industry by modern methods.

An abundance of flax and wool, as well as hide, opens great possibilities for developing the textile and leather industries. Factories of this kind are already established in many places.

An abundance of forests points at the necessity for developing the lumber industry. Lumber mills, millworks, and furniture factories are now in great demand. Later, it might be found necessary to engage in a



(4) GREAT LITHUANIAN DEMONSTRATION IN KAUNAS AGAINST POLISH AGGRESSION. July, A. D. 1919.

production of paper. Some sorts of paper are already manufactured in Lithuania.

The most pressing need, however, is for building materials. Cement, brick, roofings, and similar materials have a great demand. Cement is necessary, not only for building houses in cities and even on farms, but in building sidewalks, roads, canalization and like purposes.

The question of building good roads throughout the country overshadows all other questions, inasmuch as with good roads the value of farm products would greatly increase; and, the utilization of modern transportation facilities, such as trucks, automobiles, and the like, would be made possible.

The necessity for the development of modern industry in Lithuania is a real invitation extended to foreign capital and facilities. All machinery necessary for awakening the industrial life in Lithuania, must of necessity come from foreign countries. Likewise, from foreign countries must come capital and skill.



The countries that are likely to win concessions in Lithuania are England, Germany, Scandinavian countries, and America. The attitude of the former three countries, toward the new state of Lithuania, seemed from the first to be more friendly than that of other countries.

The United States, with 20% of all the Lithuanians harbored within its shores, was the logical sponsor for the Lithuanian industry—not speaking of the great facilities this country possesses for such an undertaking. The policies of the government of the United States toward Lithuania, heretofore pursued, have stood in the way of this happy solution. Should these policies change, before some other nation grasps the opportunity of expanding its business through Lithuania, we may yet become the authors of prosperous Lithuanian industry.

#### 8. COMMERCIAL POSSIBILITIES.

**E**XPORT and import trade of Lithuania promises great opportunities. Before Lithuania shall be able to manufacture anything worth while, it will have to buy from foreign countries all tools and machinery. Even then the absence of iron will result in a steady demand for all kinds of manufactured goods.

For export, Lithuania will have only its agricultural products. In time, it might develop industry which will offer for sale such commodities as paper, leather goods, linen and woolen goods, and the like. But such possibilities are dependent upon the development of industry. But the agricultural products, which are in great demand in many industrial countries, will supply Lithuania with sufficient funds for the purchase of all necessary manufactured goods.

Commerce with overseas countries is facilitated by the presence of two valuable Lithuanian seaports, that of Klaipeda and Palanga. Palanga harbor must be first built before ocean steamers can come to it. But the Klaipeda (Memel) might occupy in the future commercial world as important a position as are occupied by such ports as Hamburg, Bremen, and others.

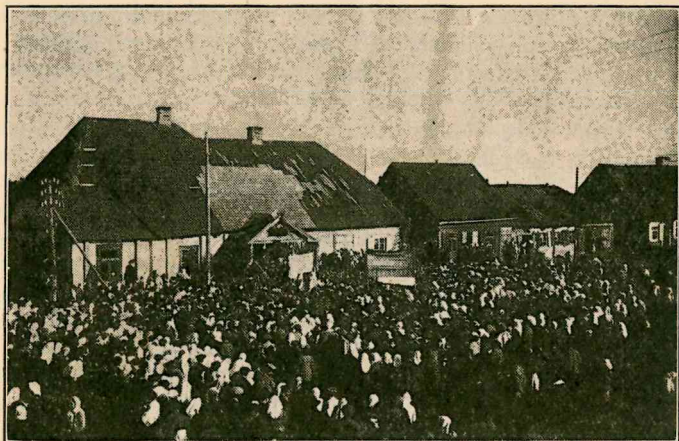
Klaipeda, being situated on the great Kurish Bay, at the mouth of the navigable river, Niemen, is destined to become the distributing station—not only for Lithuania, but also for White Russia and Ukraina. This means for the entire southeastern Europe.

Niemen already carries steamers up to Grodno, which is connected by rivers with the Lake Vygonovsk, south of Baranoviche, on the White Russian border, which in turn connects the Lithuanian waterway, by Oginski canal, with the River Pripet, emptying into the Black sea.

The importance of this water route, connecting the overseas West with the entire Near East, need not be emphasized. A glance at the map of Europe will convince the commercial mind, that the value of the Niemen basin is equal to that of the entire market of the Near East to any commercial western nation.

England appears to have appreciated the importance of commercial possibilities with Lithuania; and, it is likely that the commercial relations between Lithuania and England will result in considerable mutual advantages to both countries.

For this reason it is to be regretted that the American commercial mind, seeking foreign markets for American goods, does not seem to take much interest in Lithuanian affairs.



(5) LITHUANIAN PEASANTS' DEMONSTRATION AGAINST POLISH AGGRESSION, in the Village of KELME, Oct. 5, 1919.

#### 9. POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

THERE are two domestic national issues, which interest the Lithuanian nation the most. One of them is the relation of church to the state—the other, the agrarian question.

Of several political parties that are represented in the Lithuanian constituent assembly, there are two that will determine the future destiny of the country. One of them is the Christian Democratic Party that stands for the unity of church with the state. The other, the Social People's party, stands for the separation of church from the state, as this question is solved in the United States of America.

The numerical strength of the former party is greater than that of the latter; but, the intellectual power of the country rests with the latter. So, at present, while the Christian Democratic party, with other affiliated parties, has elected to the constituent assembly 53 delegates or representatives of total 113 members, while the latter has only 29, the cabinet of ministers is composed of the Social People's party, excepting two Christian Democrats.

The agrarian question resolves itself into this question: Should the lands be equally divided, with maximum acreage per capita limited? Or, should the ownership of the land be unrestricted?

Opinion of the entire nation favors restriction to 50 decimals per capital which, in American measure of land is equivalent to 120 acres. The Social People's party determined to introduce such a limitation into the constitution, while Christian Democratic party is as yet undecided. However, the Christian Democratic party leans toward unrestricted ownership of land, thus catering to the interests of large estate owners, who represent Lithuanian nobility and aristocracy, hostile to Lithuania and leaning toward Poland.



This hostility of the Lithuanian aristocracy toward the new Lithuanian republic, and its leaning toward Poland, originates, first of all, in the fact, that, Lithuania has abolished all titles and special privileges, while Poland is governed by aristocracy and its adherents. In fact, the most important offices in Poland are held by Lithuanian noblemen. Suffice it to mention Joseph Pilsudski, President of Poland; Prince Sapieha, minister for foreign affairs; Skirmunt, Narkevicz, and other ambassadors; Iwaszkiewicz, Dowbar-Musnicki,—generals, etc., etc.

These Lithuanian noblemen are the descendants of the houses that were responsible for the Polish-Lithuanian union, formed by the diet of Lublin, in 1569. To them the interests of the classes, or rather special privileges of nobility, are of paramount importance. To them the masses of the people,—be they Polish, Lithuanian, White Russian, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, or any other, represent only means serving the purposes of nobility.

Some of these noblemen speak the Lithuanian language as well as Polish, but the question of language is of little consequence, since, to distinguish themselves from the masses, they mostly employ some foreign language. In former times Polish nobility employed Latin. All older Polish literature is written in Latin. The History of Poland, written in the beginning of the fifteenth century, by Dlugosh, is in Latin. Sarbiewski's poetry is written in Latin. Mostly all of the older documents are in Latin. Latin at that time was in vogue; and the Polish nobility was as foreign to the Polish people as the Lithuanian nobility, since the Union of Lublin, has been foreign to the Lithuanian people.

Along with the language were introduced foreign customs and manners into Poland. There never has been native Polish culture. In later years, when Latin got stale, the French language took the place of Latin. Polish aristocracy spent all its fortunes in Paris. Polish masses have served only for the accumulation of wealth of their nobility, which were squandered abroad. Later, when Lithuanian nobility became Polonized, it adopted all the characteristics of Polish nobility. Yet, since Lithuanian masses employed the Lithuanian language, the Lithuanian nobility, to distinguish itself from the masses, began the employment of the Polish language. In this manner there was created in Lithuania this Polonized element, which now is the source of trouble between Lithuania and Poland.

Incidentally, Polonized-Lithuanian nobility became the author of Polish literature and art. While Nicholas Rey was the first among Poles, to remind them that the "Poles are not geese, for they have their own tongue," and made efforts to write poetry in Polish, and was followed in this adventure by Kochanowski, and others, yet the real Polish literature was created by the Lithuanians. J. I. Kraszewski was one of the most profuse writers who taught the Poles their language. Mickiewicz introduced romanticism into Polish poetry, while Sienkiewicz bestowed upon Poles historical literature, that has no equal in any language. All of these were Lithuanians.

This condition has created confusion in the mind of civilization, as to the identity of the Poles and Lithuanians, until all those Lithuanians who served Polish interests are regarded as Poles.

It is peculiar, that, while the Lithuanian writers used Polish language, the subject matter of their writings was Lithuanian. Likewise, the best

Lithuanian history, that of Narbut and Naruszewicz, are written in Polish.

This process of Polonization, introduced into Lithuania by the marriage of the Lithuanian grand duke, Jagello, to the Polish queen, Jadwiga, in A. D. 1386, was stimulated by the Polish clergy until, at last, it absorbed not only entire Lithuanian nobility, and town folks, but reached even the masses of peasantry. It threatened the extinction of the Lithuanian language, customs and manners.

If the Lithuanian language and the Lithuanian national spirit survived, and today there is a distinct Lithuanian nation, and the Lithuanian state, it is due entirely to the Polish policies, which served the interests not of the entire nation, but only of a noble class.

Under Polish regime, the masses of the people were deprived of all human rights. They were regarded in the light of a commodity. The noblemen were the masters of life and property of the peasants. They could trade the peasant to dogs, or at will deprive any peasant of life, without any cause, whatsoever. There were instances when the Polish, or Polonized noblemen, ordered their serfs to climb the trees and there imitate the coo-coo bird, when they were shot by noblemen, just for sport.

Peasants, under Polish regime, possessed no property. All the lands the peasants tilled were the property of the noblemen. No material, spiritual, or intellectual needs of the masses were ever recognized by the Polish masters. Consequently, no public schools for peasants were ever introduced. This circumstance accounts for that great percentage of the Polish people's illiteracy which, up to 1910, reached 85% of illiterates.

Ill treatment of the masses, after Lithuania and her dependencies were united with Poland by the treaty of Lublin, in A. D. 1569, is responsible for the formation of the Cossack order which, during the reign of Jan Kazimierz, developed such a great power that it threatened the destruction of the Polish state.

Following on the heels of the Cossack rebellion, came the Lithuanian separatistic movement, headed by Prince Janush Radzivil. The cause of this Lithuanian uprising, against Polish misrule, was found at first in the personal motives of Radzivil, who remembered the crime of murder committed on Princess Barbara Radzivil, intended wife of the Lithuanian grand duke, Sigismunt August, the last king of the Jagellonion dynasty in Poland. But, besides this purely individual motive, there was another, equally as strong, that of religious convictions. Radzivil was the follower of the Reformation movement in Lithuania. The Reformation movement, in turn, was responsible for the birth of Lithuanian literature in the Lithuanian language. Had Janush Radzivil succeeded in his efforts, to separate Lithuania from Poland, it is most likely that Russia never would have swallowed the two countries. Lithuania would have been re-established as a sovereign state, and its relations with Poland would have been solved many generations before.

While the Polish regime served to hold the masses of the people in bondage, and was responsible for the continuous internal strife, which brought about the downfall of Poland, dragging along to a political grave the Lithuanian nation, it has served to save the Lithuanians from extinction.

Polish immigration into Lithuania, after the treaty of Lublin, was not so overflowing as to squeeze out the Lithuanians. Lithuanian peas-



ants, maltreated by their Polonized noblemen, deprived of education, preserved their native tongue, and with it, Lithuanian customs and spirit.

After the downfall of the Polish regime, especially after the Polish uprising in 1863-64, the Russian government, aiming at the total destruction of Poland, confiscated the estates of the noblemen and divided them among peasants, in small tracts, on the 40 years' payment plan. Thus Lithuanian peasants come into possession of lands they tilled for centuries.

For the purpose of Russianization of these peasants, the Russian government introduced primary schools. Then, for the first time, the Lithuanian peasant found an opportunity for gaining elementary education. Prosperity among the peasants, however, soon enabled a number of Lithuanian peasants to send their children to high schools and universities. So, by 1880, the number of university graduates was sufficient for forming a Lithuanian educational society, which at once began national propaganda, aiming at a liberation of Lithuania from foreign rule.

The Lithuanian language had been prohibited, in Lithuania, since 1864. The Lithuanians began a titanic struggle, with Russia, for the reinstatement of the Lithuanian print. Several newspapers were established in Tilsit, Lithuania, under Prussian rule. Books and pamphlets were published and smuggled into Lithuania, until the masses of the people regained national consciousness. Then, the illiteracy of the Lithuanian masses began to vanish until, in 1904, the Lithuanians able to read and write reached 65%. The Russian government, realizing the futility of its efforts to Russify Lithuanians, restored, in 1904, Lithuanian print. In 1905, the Russian revolution secured for the people some measures of liberty; and, since that time, up to 1914, educational and cultural progress, in Lithuania, advanced by leaps and bounds. When the Russian imperial duma was created, Lithuania came into possession of a recognizable national status, for it was represented in that duma as a distinct nationality.

The resurrection of the Lithuania state, by virtue of the Declaration of Independence, promulgated Feb. 16, 1918, is therefore not an accident, but a logical consequence of the continuous, strenuous efforts of the Lithuanian people. Likewise, the revival of the Polish problem in Lithuania, is an outgrowth of traditional policies of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility.

The present struggle of Lithuania, with the Polish military clique, is not a struggle of the Lithuanian nation with the Polish nation, but a struggle of the Lithuanian nation with the deep-rooted traditions of special privileges of the noble class.

#### 10. FOREIGN POLICIES.

**L**ITHUANIAN foreign policies are guided by the *spirit of the Monroe doctrine*, which provides, that, "no nation should seek to extend its policy over any other nation or people, but every people should be left free to determine its own policy, its own way of development, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful."

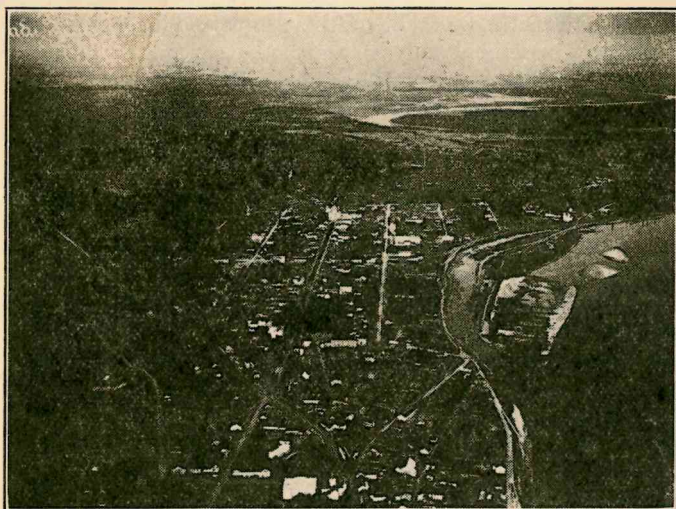
On the basis of this doctrine, Lithuania has solved its boundary questions with Latvia, Russia and Germany. In consequence there exists a genuine good will between Lithuania and her neighbors. If this spirit will be reciprocated by the neighbors, there will be no necessity for the maintenance of any army on any of the Lithuanian borders, just as there is no necessity in guarding the borders of the State of Illinois against the

aggression from Indiana, Wisconsin or Michigan, nor the states of the United States against the provinces of the Dominion of Canada.

It is of little importance to the welfare of several neighboring states, whether there is any formal federation or only a good understanding among them, as long as there is no inclination on the part of any of them to violate the *spirit of Monroe doctrine*.

On this ground Lithuania welcomes the Declaration of Independence of White Russia, which aspires for a status enabling it to shape its own destiny. And, while there is no country on the face of the earth whose population is composed of a single nationality, Lithuania recognizes the equality of rights of all the citizens within its borders, as long as these citizens adhere strictly to the principles of democracy, that a government should be the product of the will of the people, by the people, and for the people.

It seemed, that, such a policy would insure to the youthful state of Lithuania a lasting peace and tranquility. Ever since the treaty with



(3) KAUNAS (KOWNO), Provisional Capital of Lithuania. View from an aeroplane.

Russia was concluded, establishing Russo-Lithuanian borders, Lithuanian foreign office was concerned only with the forming of proper political and commercial relations with foreign countries.

The border between Lithuania and Latvia was undefined. Both nations advanced claims to a disputable territory of Illukshta and of Palanga. These disputes were amicably settled. Palanga was granted to Lithuania, and Illukshta, to Latvia. By this settlement Lithuania has gained the Palanga seaport.

The boundary, between Lithuania and East Prussia, is another matter to be settled. Romnita and the Pregel rivers would seem to be the natural boundary between Lithuania and East Prussia. However, in this territory, especially in the vicinity of Koenigsberg, the German element predominates and, for this reason, Koenigsberg, Tapiau, Veliau, Insterburg, Gumbinen line, might be objected to by Prussians, on the grounds of

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nationality. No such objection can be raised to the Nemunas-Sheshupe line, which gives to Lithuania the Memel territory, inhabited by the Lithuanians, leaving to Prussia the mixed population between Tilsit and Insterburg.

Nemunas basin belongs to Lithuania, undisputably. The Versailles treaty has internationalized, for time being, the Memel territory, and there is no effort, on the part of Lithuania, to rush the allies to transfer this land to Lithuania. Should the will of the people inhabiting this territory, express itself unequivocally for the union with Lithuania, Lithuania feels confident that the entente allies, now controlling this territory, will abide by that will, in accordance with the spirit of the Monroe doctrine.

The inhabitants of the Memel (Klaipeda) territory, have already expressed their desire for joining Lithuania and, in consequence, the allied commission has opened the port of Klaipeda (Memel) to Lithuanian trade, without customs or restrictions. This is equivalent to granting this territory to Lithuania. The only thing that remains to be done in the premises is the withdrawal of foreign control of the premises, and vesting governmental powers in the will of the people. This being done, Lithuanian boundaries will be firmly established between Prussia, Latvia and Russia.

The only sore spot in the foreign relations of Lithuania is the Polish military occupation of the Lithuanian territory and the Lithuanian capital, Vilna.

Vilna, built by the Lithuanian grand duke, Gediminas the Great, about A. D. 1320, has ever since been the capital of Lithuania. Even after the treaty of Lublin, by virtue of which Lithuania became closely allied with Poland, Vilna remained the seat of the Lithuanian government and its intellectual and spiritual center. After the termination of the Polish-Lithuanian political existence, Vilna became the seat of the Russian governor general of Lithuania. In 1905, the first Lithuanian daily was founded by Vileishis; and, since that time, it has become the center of the Lithuanian national activities. In Vilna was formed the Lithuanian Society of Science, and the Lithuanian Society of Arts, in 1905. Ever since that time Vilna has been the sponsor for all Lithuanian national, educational, cultural and economical enterprises. In 1918 the first Lithuanian national assembly promulgated the Lithuanian Declaration of Independence in Vilna.

The importance of Vilna to Lithuania, besides all traditional and moral considerations, lies in the fact, that, it is fitted for the housing of all the governmental institutions. Building of a new capital would necessitate great expenditures of money, which could be used to much greater advantage in promotion of education throughout the country, and perfecting the governmental and utilitarian facilities.

Even all those considerations, vital to the best interest of Lithuania as they are; and the Lithuanian claims to Vilna and other Lithuanian territory occupied by Poles, just as they are, would not have any weight, and would not bring Lithuania to an armed clash with the Poles, had the inhabitants of the country, out of their own free will, decided by a free and uninfluenced choice to join Poland. Lithuanians would have abided by the expressed will of the people, and would, without objection, have withdrawn to regions where the will of the people favored the Lithuanian government. But nothing of the kind has occurred.

The Lithuanian territory of the province of Grodno and of Vilna were seized by the Polish army, without consulting in any way the will of the people. This military rule persists to this day. Hence entire Lithuania has risen in arms; and, were it not for Col. Chardigny's intervention, the army of Zeligowski would have been driven from Lithuania, long ago.

The burden of this Polish military adventure against Lithuania weighs heavily on both Lithuanian and the Polish peoples. In consequence, Lithuania presents today an armed camp, with every man and woman holding arms ready for action against the foreign invaders.

On the other side, Poland, which has within its own borders millions of starving children, maintains a gigantic army of aggression. This military policy works ruin for the Polish nation. Were this Polish army disbanded, and friendly relations with Lithuania established, these thousands of the Polish soldiers would return to their homes, and engage in peaceful occupations, tending to solve the critical economical problems of Poland.

It is plain, therefore, that this military adventure of the Polish military clique is not calculated to advance the best interests of the Polish nation, which, above all, needs tranquility and order within its own borders. And, since this is the obvious situation, the question arises: In whose interests is this Polish military aggression carried on against Lithuania?

This is the problem for the Polish people to solve.

The Lithuanians have answered this question definitely. The Polish people, giving unprejudiced thought to it, will discover, that this whole strife is carried on in the interest of special privileges of the Lithuanian noblemen, who, by virtue of the will of their own people, have lost titles and all special privileges.

The blindness of this Lithuanian nobility, parading in the garb of the Poles, is responsible for their own undoing. By invading their own land with the Polish armies, they have incited the people against nobility, which never again will rise in Lithuania. The time may come when the cultural attainments of every Lithuanian will surpass those of the once most refined noblemen. But this condition will be looked upon as a blessing, emanating from the government established by the people, for the people, with no trace of special privileges left, which characterized the government by the caste of noblemen.

That this spirit is real in Lithuania, the best evidence is found in the fact, that, undisputable as are the Lithuanian rights to the possession of Vilna, and the entire Lithuanian territory now under Polish military occupation, the Lithuanian government accepted the office of the League of Nations, for mediation.

From April 18, 1921, the Polish-Lithuanian negotiations are supposed to be pending in Brussels, under the direction of M. Paul Hyman. Prime minister of Lithuania, Dr. Grinius, has issued a statement, setting forth Lithuanian proposition.

According to this statement, the Lithuanian government proposes the withdrawal of the Polish military forces from the occupied territory, and the convening of a national assembly of this territory, for the purpose of forming of their own government, which would consult the will of the people and decide upon the status of the country, whether it wishes to be



absolutely independent in itself, or choose Lithuania or Poland for their allegiance.

In this instance, the spirit of Monroe doctrine reveals itself again in its full glory. Incidentally, it lends to Lithuania a conclusive proof of its peaceful endeavors, and tends to promote not only peace and tranquility among nations, but, likewise, to generate a genuine good will and friendship, which alone can save the world from the destructive burden of militarism.

The Polish military clique which, by aggression against Lithuania, has brought upon the name of Poland the stain of imperialism, is now offered an honorable retreat. No such opportunity was given to Germany, when it invaded Belgium, in 1914, and brought upon itself the consequences, which are now crushing the German nation.

The adventure of Zeligowski, in the invasion of Lithuania, is identical with the adventure of the German kaiser, in the invasion of Belgium. It was fortunate for both, Lithuania and Poland, that the entente allies stopped the Polish-Lithuanian war which, if permitted to go on, would by this time have cost both nations hundreds of thousands of lives.

Lithuania has faith in the justice of the mediators, and hopes that the Vilna-Grodno question may be solved, in such a manner as to restore between Lithuania and Poland not only peace, but genuine good will and friendship.

## Part II

# Ancient Lithuania

**T**HE REAPPEARANCE OF LITHUANIA as an independent, sovereign state of Europe, reopens an old volume of history of the world, which was closed in A. D. 1569, with the intent and purpose never to reopen.

### ETHNOGRAPHICAL QUESTION.

**LITHUANIAN HISTORY** comprehends several distinct periods, embodying fundamental changes in the political and ethnographical status of the Lithuanian regions.

**THE PRINCIPAL PERIODS** may be designated as follows:

- I. Prehistoric period.
- II. Formation of Greece and of Roman empire.
- III. From the fall of Roman empire to the rise of Novgorod the Great.
- IV. From the Rise of Novgorod the Great to the formation of the Teutonic order of the Knights of the Sword in Livonia.
- V. From the Teutonic invasion of Livonia to the marriage of Jagello and Jadwiga.
- VI. Jagellonian period.
- VII. Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.
- VIII. From the fall of Poland to the abolition of serfdom in Lithuania.
- IX. From the abolition of serfdom to the restoration of the Lithuanian type in 1904.
- X. From 1904 to 1914.
- XI. From 1914 to 1918.
- XII. Restoration of Lithuania.

**THE DEFINITE** location of Lithuania, as an ethnic unit, may be ascertained from the fifth century of the present era, to this time. The Lithuanian regions, in the fifth century, extended from the River Vistula on the West, to the Rivers Berezina and Pripiet, on the East; and from the Baltic sea and the River Duna (Dvina) on the North, to the Pripiet marshes and the River Bug on the South.

**THESE REGIONS** were inhabited by a people speaking the same, Lithuanian, language; worshipping the same gods;

having the same character, customs, manners and traditions, and being under the jurisdiction of the same church. They were fire worshippers, recognizing as their spiritual leader, the Lithuanian high priest, called Kriviu-Krivaitis.

**THE POLITICAL STATUS** of these inhabitants differed according to location. Where it was necessary to provide defense against foreign aggression, more definite political and military organization was maintained; while, on the other hand, where no danger of foreign invasion existed, the people were governed simply by priests and chiefs, appointed by the people. The method of governments was pure democracy.

**THE LANGUAGE** used by these peoples is recognized by philologists as the Letto-Lithuanian group of the Aryan speech. Philologists recognize three distinct dialects of the Lithuanian, namely: I. The Lithuanian; II. The Old Prussian; and III. The Lettish. Two of these three dialects,—Lithuanian and the Lettish, survive to this day. The Old Prussian became extinct in the XVIth century.

### PRE-HISTORIC LITHUANIAN.

**T**HE PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD, of necessity, remains a matter of hypothetical speculation. Nothing definite can be said of the period, which is not recorded. These hypothetical speculations are based chiefly on linguistic relations of the historic peoples; on the archeological findings, craneological studies, religious ideas, customs, manners, habits and traditions.

**THE LINGUISTIC EVIDENCES**, which by philologists are regarded as "fossil history," occupy the most important place in the hypothetical speculations as to the origin and the original location of Lithuanians. Isaac Taylor, in his books: "On the Origin of the Aryans," leads the scholars in his attention to the importance the Lithuanians occupy in the family of the Aryan peoples. First of all, he contends, that, the Lithuanian language is the original Aryan speech; and, secondly, that, the Lithuanians have the best claim to represent the original Aryans. Benjamin W. Dwight, in his book,—*"Modern*





(6) LITHUANIAN PRIME MINISTER, M. SLEZEVICZ, Addressing Demonstration Against Poles from the Balcony of the Executive Mansion.

Philology," seconds Isaac Taylor with the assertion, that, the Lithuanian language is the oldest language in the world.

SCHOLARS of the type of Taylor and Dwight are not likely to make assertions on other than scientific grounds. Hence, their contentions cannot be disposed of as the mere fancy of an enthusiast, dealing with matter the least interesting to the civilized world,—for, at the time they made these assertions: Dwight, in 1860; Taylor, in 1890, the Lithuanians were so deeply submerged under foreign domination, that even the name of their country was not to be found on the maps of the world. And yet, Taylor contends: The cradle of the Aryan race must have been in the Lithuanian regions. What these "Lithuanian regions" represented, and where they were located, is left unanswered. On the proper answer to this question depends not only the unearthing of the prehistoric status of Lithuania, and its location, but the whole secret of the origin of the Aryan race, and of its differentiations into several branches, some of which are now totally extinct, while others are found so utterly transformed as to have lost all traits of their former primitive, appearance and character.

A SURVEY of Lithuanian characteristics and the characteristics of the present neighbors of the Lithuanians, sufficient to permit analytical comparison, will disclose the fact, that, they are surrounded by nations wholly different in every respect,—in language, character, customs, manners, ideas, ideals, and traditions. A survey of the prehistoric peoples, and comparison of them with the Lithuanians, will bring to light the astonishing fact, that, for instance, the ancient Hindus resemble Lithuanians—not only in speech, but also in religious ideas, and other peculiarities.

MOST STRIKING, is, of course, the likeness of the Lithuanian language with the Sanskrit, which became a dead language some fourteen centuries before Christ, or before Hellenic civilization came into being. Along with the likeness of the Lithuanian with Sanskrit, comes the likeness of the Brahman ideas with those of the primitive Lithuanians. Taking the names of the Brahman gods, we find them identical with the Lithuanian. Here the Supreme Being is called, by both nations, "Devas"; and Perunas, or Perkunas, is regarded as the Creator of the Universe. Likewise the goddesses, both in the Brahman and in the Lithuanian religion, were called "devaites."

AGNIS, of the Brahmins, and the UGNIS of the Lithuanians, the god of fire, occupied the pre-eminent position in the religious ideas. In both places was signified the conception of the supreme wisdom of the creator, symbolized in fire, representing the light, heat and the generation of life,—or the most important element.

VEDIC HYMNS disclose the ideas and conceptions of the prehistoric Hindu, that were common in Lithuania up to the end of the fourteenth century of the present era. RASA, the distant river, meaning in the Lithuanian *dew*, represents the important element of water, in all of its forms. VAYU, the wind, in Lithuanian, *Vejas*, is praised for its services. MITRA, meaning in Lithuanian, wise or wisdom, is goddess of wisdom in Brahman. RUDRA, originating from the verb "raudoti," to weep, was the goddess of death,—"the unconquered conqueror." And it is peculiar, that, the Lithuanians preserved the custom of Raudos to practically the present day. Lithuanian poets have immortalized the glory of Vytautas, the Great, by a poem, entitled—"Vytauto Raudos."

KATHA UPANISHAD, in all its Adhyayas and Vallis, and especially, the "Teachings of Yagnavalkya," is a revelation of the community of the ideas between the Brahmins and the Lithuanians. The same is true of KHANDOGYA UPANISHAD, in all its Prapatakas and Khandas, as well as of the Laws of Manu.

BUDHIST IDEAS offer as many connecting links as do the Brahman. Vaggians, of the Buddhists, and, the *vagis*, of the Lithuanians, designated thieves, whom it was necessary to ruin. RISHIS, of the Buddhists, was the conception of solidarity, while in Lithuanian it means the same thing. In everyday use, "ryshis," in Lithuanian, means a knot. THE BUDDHA (the awakened), means in Lithuanian the same thing.

GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTION of the Sanskrit is almost identical with that of the Lithuanian. For instance, declension of the word "avis," which means in both of the languages the same thing—a sheep, in singular has the same endings in both languages in all eight cases. It must be here remarked, that, while Sanskrit has eight cases, the Lithuanian, until recent times, had nine; while Latin, along with the Slavonic languages, preserved only seven; the Greek five; German four; and the English only three, in fact only one case.



Upon inquiry, it will be found, that, the older the language is the more flexible it is.

LINGUISTIC relationship between the Lithuanian and the Latin, as well as the Greek, is very significant. Were the Lithuanians a northern European people from the origin, and were the Lithuanian regions confined to the present or even historic boundaries of Lithuania, this relationship of the languages and ideas, could not be explained. Hence the hypothesis: The Lithuanians, at some remote time, must have occupied either different regions, or else, extended from Asia Minor to the Baltic sea. This hypothesis leads us to most interesting findings, which enable us to unearth the prehistoric times.

IN PASSING OVER THIS PERIOD it must be noted, that, the Hindus where not the inhabitants of India, but that they moved there in latter times, under pressure of foreign aggression. Since they crossed the River Indu-Kush, they become the masters of Sudras, who originally inhabited Indias and were either natives or settlers of the Indias, before the time of the Brahmans.

#### HELLENIC AND ROMAN ERA.

**A** POSITIVELY ESTABLISHED FACT is, that, the Hellenic republic—and the Roman empire—were established by the conquerors of the native population; and, consequently, that, the Hellenic and the Roman nations were formed out of the fusion of the natives and the conquerors.

HELLENIC CIVILIZATION, according to Prof. H. R. Hall's,—"The Oldest Civilization of Greece," and Prof. William Ridgeway's,—"The Early Age of Greece," was the result of the "Mycenean" civilization, of the Pelasgians and Hittitti or Kheta. These scholars agree on one proposition: The Greeks, before the conquest of Kheteans and Pelasgians, were savages; and, their present nationality was the product of assimilation of the civilized Pelasgians and other non-Hellenic peoples.

"THE ANCIENT HISTORY," by Charles Rollin, later principal of the University of Paris, shows, that, neither Romans nor Greeks were natives of the regions of which they became absolute masters.

FORMATION OF GREECE AND OF ROME, belongs to history. From the time of Herodotus began the historic era, as far as Asia Minor and Southern Europe were concerned. Yet, the his-

tories of these nations, being written by patriots of Greece or of Rome, are not to be taken as absolutely correct in the matters of foreign nationalities. Hence, since the times of Herodotus, there were nations and peoples outside of history, as though this branch of science has never existed. Now, as far as Lithuania is concerned, American historians and the American public were in dark up to the World War, which proves, that the definition of the "historic times" applies differently in every country and nation.

GROTE'S—"GREECE," and EDWARD GIBBON'S,—"ROME," are valuable works for students who are familiar with all the European languages—and the traditions and histories of all the European and Asiatic peoples. Otherwise, they are confusing. Millman, who edited Gibbon's "Rome," helps to make clear many facts given by Gibbon, which otherwise would have remained uncomprehensive. Yet, Millman himself, confessed his limitations in defining even so great and powerful nations, as were Scythians.

LITHUANIANS, as such, are nowhere mentioned, by Latin or Greek historians; but, they mentioned many a people, who answered the description of the Lithuanians. Among such peoples were Scythians, Thracians, Dacians, Getaes, and Heruli, in Europe; and Bithenians, Cilicians, Medians, Kaunians, Phrygians, Cappadocians,—in Asia Minor.

KING RADAGAIISIUS, mentioned by Gibbon, as the King of Balti, (Radagaisus), A. D. 406, comes closest to bringing to prominence the position the people of "Balti," or, properly speaking, Lithuanians, occupied in those times. Yet Gibbon makes a direct reference to the Lithuanians, wherein it is evident, that his knowledge of this people was very limited. It only serves to prove, that the Lithuanians played a part in the history of the Roman times.

THE FALL OF ROMAN EMPIRE brought about the Middle Ages, which served to form practically all modern nations, among them, the Lithuanian nation, as it existed up to modern times.

#### THE MIDDLE AGES.

**T**HE FIFTH CENTURY witnessed the formation of the Lithuanian federation of the Parusnian states. The founders of this federation, known to Latin historians as "BORUSIA," were Vaidevutis or Vytautas, and Brutenis or Prutenis. Brutenis or Prutenis established the Lithuanian Rus-



nian hierarchy with the seat in Romove. The continuity of this theocratical federation, under the jurisdiction of Romove Kriviu-Krivaitises, is evident from Praetorius'es and Narbutas' lists of Kriviu-Krivaitises, containing 48 names. The last of these Krivaitises, Alepsis, embraced Christianity in 1265, when Romove was destroyed by the Teutonic Crusaders. It is therefore evident, that, the Parusnian federation existed for about eight centuries.

The boundaries of the Parusnian federation extended from the River Vistula, on the West, to the River Niemen (Nemunas) on the East; and from the Baltic sea, on the North, to the River Bug, on the South. It comprised twelve provinces, namely: 1. Shalauja; 2. Natangia; 3. Bartia; 4. Galindia; 5. Varmia; 6. Oggonia; 7. Pamezonja; 8. Pagzonja; 9. Kulmia; 10. Samia or Sambia; 11. Sudavia, 12. Nadravia and 13. Lithuania.

Each of these states were named after the first governor, appointed by Vaidvutis.

SAMOGETHIA was located east of the River Niemen, comprising government of Kowno (Kaunas) and parts of Vilna and Souvalki.

GETVINGIA AND PALETIA extended south of Samogethia, and comprised the present governments of Lomzha, Grodna, Vilna and Minsk.

KRIVICHIA, extended east of Samogethia and Getvingia, and comprised the governments of Vitebsk, Smolensk, Polock, Pskov, and Mohylev.

LETGALIA, comprised part of the government of Vitebsk, and of Livonia.

ZHIAMGALIA (Semigalia) and COURONIA, comprised present Letvia.

All these peoples spoke the same, Lithuanian language; were under the jurisdiction of Romove church; had the same customs, manners, culture, traditions, character and habits.

Their supreme authority were Kriviu-Krivaitises. They were administered by chiefs, appointed by the people. Yet, Kriviu-Krivaitises and his priests (Kunigas), attended to the spiritual and moral needs of the people, while military and civil affairs were left to the discretion of the chiefs, called "Rykis." It is likely, that from "Kunigas" the Teutonic peoples obtained their "kungs," then "koenigs," and then "kings"; while Latins called their chief magistrates, "Rex," which is an alteration of "rykis."

**THE PARUSNIAN FEDERATION** was called to life by the Skandinavian and Mazurian aggression. The Mazurian manace began to loom up large at the time of Maslav, while Scandinavians continually disturbed the peace of the Lithuanians, by their incursions for loot. Defenses provided by this Parusnian federation effectively checked the danger of foreign rule and, up to the thirteenth century, the Parusnians enjoyed comparative peace.

EASTERN MENACE. A. D., 862.

**ROURICK, SENEUS AND TRUVOR**, Rusnian princes called by Novgorodian Slavs to rule their country, opened an era of Slavonic aggression. OLEG, son of Rourick, embarked on an imperialistic enterprise and, having conquered Kriviches and other peoples along the River Dniepr, undertook the conquest of the Bisantian empire, and to capture Constantinople.

NEMUNIAN DYNASTY OF LITHUANIA.

**OLEG'S ADVENTURES** continued from A. D. 879 to 912. The conquest of Kriviachia involved adjoining Lithuanian countries in a war with Slavs. Under such circumstances it was necessary to maintain a military force, and to provide a permanent defense of the Lithuanian nation.

NEMUNAS emerged as a leader, and the founder of Nemunian dynasty, which shaped the destinies of Lithuania up to the year A. D. 1267.

POLISH MENACE.

POLAND began to loom up as military power about the ninth century. In 965, Polish king, Mieczyslaw I, married Bohemian princess, Dombrovka, and embraced Christianity. Alliance with Bohemia encouraged Poland to embark an imperialistic enterprise, and Boleslaw Chrobry (982-1025) opened the military career of Poland, by conquest of Paletia and the Getvingians provinces. In 1018 he conquered Kiev.

This Polish aggression opened Polish-Lithuanian hostilities, which continued from generation to generation, and from century to century. Another Polish king, Boleslaw Krzywousty (1102-1138), conquered Pomerania, and invaded Parusnia. Here the Lithuanians and Samogethians came to the rescue of the Parusnians; and Krzywousty crossed his sword with the sword of the Grand duke of Lithuania, Spera.

TEUTONIC MENACE.

GERMAN TRADERS from Hamburg, Bremen and Luebeck, interested in the famous Hanzeyan commerce, set-



tled in Latvia in A. D. 1111. Soon after they brought their priests, and began religious propaganda among Latvians. As soon as they won for their religion some prominent Latvians, they began to seek the authority in the country, and grew arrogant and domineering. This provoked the indignation of the natives, which brought about a strife, resulting in the clash of arms.

THE TEUTONIC ORDER of the Knights of the Sword, commonly known as Livonian knights, was the result of this strife; and, after many years of bloody war, the Livonian Order established Teutonic rule in what is now known Latvia and Letgallia. The Grand Duke of Lithuania, Sigismunt August, restored what was then known as Livonia, to Lithuania in 1568.

#### TEUTONIC CRUSADERS.

MAZURIAN DUKE CONRAD, seeing the Lithuanians engaged in a bloody war with Livonian Knights and Eastern Slavs, organized a military order called "Bracia Dobrzynscy," modeled after the Livonian Knights; and, in 1218, opened a campaign against Kulmia and other Parusnian provinces. In the course of six years the Parusnians destroyed the forces of Conrad; and, in reprisal, ravaged Mazuria, taking its capital, Plock.

THE DESPAIRING CONRAD was approached by the Bishop Christian of Olive, Pomerania, who suggested an alliance with the Teutonic order of the Knights of the Cross, which after its return from Holy Land, was an idle burden to the Teutonic emperor. Negotiations followed between Conrad of Mazuria and the Grand Master Salza, of the Teutonic order, who consulted the Pope; and, obtaining his consent, joined the Poles in the conquest of Lithuania.

#### TARTARIC MENACE.

CHINGIS KHAN TIMUCHIN, having conquered the whole of Asia and south-eastern Europe, decided to include Lithuania in his victorious march westward. This last foe completed the list of the enemies of Lithuania, which being isolated by its ancient religion from the rest of Europe, had to meet the combined power of the whole world, single handed.

NO GREATER DRAMA has ever been played anywhere in the world. Both Christian heads, the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox church, joined hands in the destruction of what they termed, "paganism." Tartaric aggression completed the concert of the world powers, arrayed against the peaceful people of the Baltic shores.

PAGAN ROMOVE FACED CHRISTIAN ROME in a merciless contest of military might. On the Christian side, determination to conquer; and on the Lithuanian side, determination to die or live free, characterized this gigantic strife.

THE DESTRUCTION OF LITHUANIA was the sole object of the Western civilization, aided by the aggressive spirit of the East. Alone in the whole world, Lithuania faced the storm. The outcome of the struggle depended on the superiority of courage, determination, valor and virtues of the combatants. The justice of the cause was with Lithuania, while military armament, training, equipment and organization gave superiority to her enemies.

#### LITHUANIAN GRAND DUKES.

TWO ROYAL DYNASTIES OF LITHUANIA spent their lives in the bloody strife, until all of her enemies acknowledged their defeat, and Lithuania attained undisputable superiority.

#### NEMUNIAN DYNASTY.

NEMUNAS, mentioned by the Polish historian, Strykowski, as Palemon or Panemon, had four sons: KUNAS, BARKUS, SPIERA, and DIEVALTIS. Barkus governed Samogethia, from the Baltic sea to the rivers Nieman and Jura. At the confluence of Jura into Nieman, he built a castle, named after the river and himself,—Jur-Barkas. The town survives to this day. Kunas governed the country between rivers Neris (Vilija) and Nemunas (Nieman), and also at the confluence of these rivers, he erected a castle, called after himself,—Kaunas, commonly known as *Kovno*, where the temporary capital of Lithuania is established. His rule extended over the entire country, irrigated by the rivers Neris, Nemunas, Dubisa and Neveza. Spera governed the country east of the river Neveza, Szventa and Szirvinta. He built a castle in a great lake, and named it after himself, Spira. Dievaltis built the castle of Vilkmmerge on the banks of the river Szventa; and, in the near vicinity, another castle, called after himself,—Dievaltava.

Barkus is said to have died childless, and the people, in appreciation of his good deeds, built for him a great mound, and for long years remembered his memory.

Spera succeeded Barkus, as the grand duke of Lithuania. He is said to have carried on the warfare with Poles, Swedes, and Danes—*Kojalowicz, Historia Litwy*.



In the war with Poland, he faced Boleslaus Chrobry (The Brave), who conquered Bohemians, Moravians, Silesians, Saxons and Pomeranians. Having conquered all his neighbors, Boleslaus Chrobry invaded Lithuania; and, having destroyed Romove, murdered its Kriviu-Krivaitis, by name Levailis, in 1017. Spera sent reinforcements to the Parusnians, where Kulmians, Pagezonians and Natangians were most pressed by the Poles, who captured the Parusnian cities,—Rede, Radzina and Omega or Balga. When Polish menace developed into threatening proportions to Samogethia itself, Spera at the head of the Samogethian forces, engaged Boleslaus Chrobry in a bloody battle, laying thousands of Poles on the field.

The news of the battles between the Boleslaus and Spera forces, soon reached Pomeranians and Kievians, who rebelled against Polish rule, and the Boleslaus battered unmercifully by Spera's forces, was forced to retreat. Thus Parusnia was saved from Polish yoke.

Kunas succeeded Spera, as the grand duke of Lithuania. Historians do not mention his achievements, outside, that he had two sons.—KERNIUS and GIMBUTAS.—*Kojalowicz, Hist. Litwy.*

Kernius governed Lithuania proper, Gimbutas,—Samogethia. South-Eastern Slavonic and Polish aggressions awakened Kernius to the necessity of strengthening defenses of Lithuania; and, with this purpose in view, he built a powerful castle on the banks of the river Neris (Vilija). Kernava soon became a city, where Kernius established the capital of all Lithuania. The ruins of Kernava remain to this day, reminding of the ancient glory of the nation.

For the time being, Samogethia and Lithuania proper were free from foreign aggression. But the neighboring Lithuanian states, Parusnians and Getvingians, were engaged in a continuous war with Poles and other Slavs. At that time the River Ossa was the boundary line between Poland and Lithuanian states. Of all these states, Kulmia was the most exposed to Polish aggression. To safeguard Lithuanian borders, the castle of Graudene (now Grudziondz) was built at the confluence of the Rivers Ossa and Isla (Vistula), where a strong garrison was maintained. Strengthened border insured comparative peace to Lithuania up to A. D. 1058.

Northern Lithuania, however, remained a theatre of a continuous strife. In A. D. 1080, the famous king of Danes, Kanut, invaded Lithuania, where after the war nothing but water

and earth were left. And, though the country was devastated, Lithuanians saved their freedom and independence.

BOLESLAUS THE BRAVE, king of Poland, succeeded in the subjugation of Kulmia, which for a time was compelled to pay tribute to Poland.

THE WEAKNESS of the Lithuanian state, at that time, was due to the absence of unity among various dukes. Each dukedom was governed independently, and there was no central government for the entire country. True, in case of an emergency, the neighboring dukes helped their embattled countrymen; yet, such help was often belated. Every principality was supposed to care for her own defenses. This condition was responsible for foreign aggression, which was encouraged by a prospect of subjugation of the little dukedoms one by one.

This accounted for the Polish successes, at the time when Kernius and Gimbutas were engaged in a war with the south-eastern Slavs. Discord among the Slavonic dukes gave an opportunity for Gimbut and Kernius to free Krivichia from the Slavonic rule. First of all they invaded the Braslav regions, and captured the city of Braslav, which was annexed to Lithuania. An expedition to Palack was equally successful, but the country was not annexed to Lithuania, as other storms began to gather in the south, and Kernius with Gimbutas returned with great loot to Kernava, to prepare the expeditions against Lutsk, Vladimir and Lemberg (Lwow). In this expedition Samogethians and Lithuanians proper, were joined by Getvingians, whereby the power of Lithuania was greatly increased.

#### ZHIBUNTAS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA.

Kernius left a daughter by the name of Payauta, who married a prince, Zhibuntas, who after the death of Kernius became the Grand Duke of Lithuania. In Zhibuntas' times, closer relations were reached between various Lithuanian countries, and the power of the Lithuanians reached a noted degree. In those times the Lithuanians were known as Scythians. The old Kriviches by that time already had lost much of their Lithuanism; and, being converted to Christianity, became what is now known as the White Russians.

Toward the end of the twelfth century, the war between Lithuania and the Novgorod and other Slavs reached a fateful stage. In 1198 the Lithuanians and Samogethians invaded Pleskava and captured the fortress of Velikija Luki.



**P**OLISH aggression against the Parusian states and the Paletians (Poleziani), disturbed entire Lithuania. The Paletians, occupying the regions between the Rivers Bug and Vistula, had several powerful fortresses:—Draichin, on the River Bug, Brest, Naujapolis and Kelmas.

In those times, the Samogethians, under their grand duke, Mantvilas, harassed the Northwestern Slavs. In 1215, Mantvila with his son, Vikindas, defeated the duke of Novgorod, and his ally, duke of Smolensk.

#### ERDVILLA THE CONQUEROR.

Continuous wars with all the neighbors, without a definite result, perpetually disturbing the peace of Lithuania, prompted the grand duke of Lithuania to call a special session of the Lithuanian senate in Kernava, where it was decided upon consolidation of all the Lithuania forces under one leadership. Samogethia, Zhiamgalia (Samigalia), Curonia, Letgalia, Lithuania, Getvingia and Paletia, joined Erdvilas, who raised and army of 15,000 picked men, and, dividing this force into three divisions, appointed three commanders, Biksis, Grumpis, and Graudzhius, distinguished warriors; and, assuming in person chief command, in 1217, crossed the River Neris (Vilija) and advanced into Getvingia. Joined by Getvingian forces, he began driving out the Slavs from the country.

First of all, he captured the fortresses of Gardinas (Grodno), Brest, Draichin, Briansk, Surazh, and Mozyr, and advanced to the river Tripente (Tripec). On the banks of the river Tripente he established a military camp, with a powerful force, to guard the border.

The inhabitants of these regions, though Lithuanians by origin, having been subjected to Slavonic rule for a long time, and being Christianized, were already Slavonized. To win their good will, Erdvila confirmed all the privileges and liberties of their religion, and proclaimed himself the protector of their rights and property. He had not levied any tribute upon them, and requested their assistance in case of war only with the aggressive neighbors.

This pleased the inhabitants who, under the strong arm of the powerful Lithuanian ruler, were to enjoy peace and tranquillity. To safeguard the country from foreign invasions, Erdvila built the powerful castle of Naujapile (Nowogrodek). Annexing the country to Lithuania, he appointed prince Skir-

mantas, its governor general, under whose jurisdiction, general Eikshis received Eikshishki; Strumpis-Ashmena; Grumpis-Grumpena; and Graudzhius-Grauzhiski.—*Kojalowicz, Historia Litwy.*

GINTVILA, in the meantime, conquered White Russia, former Krivichia, and having captured its capital, Palack, annexed the country to Lithuania, and bestowed upon the country religious freedom, liberty and self-government. From that time, the inhabitants of this province governed themselves by appointing 30 deputies to a central government, who administered the affairs of the country, as a senate.

In reprisals for the devastation of Letgalia, Gintvila advanced against Novgorod the Great, Pleskava and Selzensk, reducing the country to ruins.

ZHIBUNTAS, OR ZHEBENA, with a powerful army, advanced against Mazuria, which had subjugated Kulmia and other Lithuanian peoples. With lightning swiftness he traversed the entire Mazuria; and, having crushed all opposition, he sent envoys to duke Conrad, with this message: "If you want to enjoy peace and freedom, send at once to my camp several hundred good horses and the clothing for my men." Conrad fulfilled this request, and Zhibuntas happily returned to Kernava.

#### ZHIRINA, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA; ERDVILA—OF SAMOGETHIA

In 1218, the war with the Livonian knights occupied the attention of Lithuania. VESTERIS, duke of Zhiamgalia, defended the country against the forces of bishop Albert. MINGAILA, in the meantime, was confronted by the uprising of the Palackians, whom he subdued, and maintained the rule of Palack. Soon after Mingaila died, leaving two sons:—GENVILA, governor of Palack, and SKIRMUNTAS, governor of Naujapile (Novogrodek).—*Schloeser, 1. 35.*

SKIRMANTAS, menaced by Mstislav, sent to Kernava for reinforcements. At the head of the Samogethian-Lithuanian forces, Erdvila rushed to reinforce Skirmantas; and, the united armies of Lithuania met Mstislav's army on the banks of the River Jasiolda. A bloody battle ensued, in which Mscislav fell, and the remnants of his army drowned in Jasiolda, fleeing from the victorious Lithuanians. Skirmantas captured Pinsk and Tursk, and annexed them to Lithuania.

On other fields, Lithuanians defeated Slavs, and occupied the cities of Cherni-



hov, Kharachev, Starodub, Mozyr, and entire Severija, which they annexed to Lithuania, and Skirmantas appointed his and TREINAITIS, the governors of the ennexed provinces.

The Slavs, having satified themselves that the wars, with ever growing power and might of Lithuania, meant only their own destruction, sued for peace; and, as a result, a treaty was concluded, whereby Lithuanians were permitted to trade in Slavonic countries, and the Slavs, in Lithuania.

This treaty was signed, on behalf of Lithuania, by the grand duke ZHIVIBUNTAS; on behalf of Samogethia, by grand duke ERDVILA, and other Samogethian and Lithuanian princes: Viginas, Aruskelis, Kintibundas, Jonibundas, Bumovis, Vizeivis, Vizslis, Kiteinis, Pleskus, Asebileilis, Vizmuntas, Mindove, Gedvila, Sprudeikis and Jodkus; on behalf of Letgalians and Semigalians, dukes:—Pukeikis, Vikszis, and Lygeikis.

Erdvila, having so terminated the war with Slavs, returned to Kernava, where the event was celebrated with great pomp and splendor.—*Karamzin, 1st, Gosud Rossii, T, III, v. VIII.*

#### DEFEAT OF CHINGHIS KHAN TIMUTCHIN.

CHINGIS KHAN TIMUTCHIN, having conquered entire Asia, and the entire south-eastern Europe, in 1223, subjugated Alans and Palauces, who appealed for help to the grand duke of Slavs for help saying: "Today the Tartars occupied our country, tomorrow they will occupy yours." In the battle of Kalka, Tartars defeated Slavs, and then sent the envoys to Lithuania demanding a tribute.

Erdvila received the Tartaric envoys with great courtesy, and entertained them for several days the best he could. In the meantime, he issued orders to Semigalia, Samogethia, Lithuania, Getvingia and Paletia, to mobilize all forces for a decisive battle with the Tartars. When the armies were all mobilized and stationed in strategic positions, Erdvila ordered the Tartaric envoys brought before him, and then he handed to them two spears, saying: "I am sending these spears to your master, who, although he has conquered half of the world, yet has not enough power to defeat Lithuania."

The Tartaric envoys then understood what these Lithuanian entertainments meant; and, returning to their camp, told their master what they saw in Lithuania.

Erdvila, in the meantime, advanced with his armies against the enemy, who, enraged by the Lithuanian

answer, immediately crossed the River Niper (Dniepr) and in the vicinity of the River Tripenke and established their camp. Coming near the Tartars, he rested his men; and, having completed battle formation at night, at the day break rushed upon Tartars with such terrible ferocity, that their lines soon were broken. The Tartars fought with great valor; but, battered by the invincible Lithuanians, gave way and fled in disorder. Most of them that escaped the Lithuanian sword perished in the swamps or drowned in the River Tripenke. So ended this great Tartaric adventure to conquer Lithuania; and, after this crushing defeat, Europe was saved from Tartaric aggression for a long time.

#### RIMGAUDAS THE GREAT, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA, UTENIS GRAND DUKE OF SAMOGETHIA—THEIR WARS WITH LIVONIAN KNIGHTS AND TARTARS.

WHILE THE LITHUANIANS were engaged in successful wars with Slavs, the Teutonic Crusaders, supported by entire western Europe, incited by popes against "pagan" Lithuania, carried on the war of extermination in the Parusnian countries. At the same time, Livonian knights pressed their advantage in Couronia, Semigalia and Letgalia.

GRAND MASTER VOLKIN conducted the campaign of the Livonian knights, while at the head of Teutonic Crusaders, was the famous Grand Master Salca.

Utenis, grand duke of Samogethia, resisted the Teutonic onslaught in Livonia, supported by Vesteris, duke of Semigalia. In successful expeditions against Livonian knights, Utenis captured Tarapat (Dorpat) and forced Livonian knights to seek an armistice. In 1230 an armistice was signed by bishop Albert, and the Semigalians and Coronians, represented by Rendis, Gulevalis, Pidevalis, Matkulis, Vainis, Purvis, Ugesis, Kandausis and Anusis.

The Livonian knights, realizing their dangerous position, appealed to Rome for help. At the same time they opened negotiations with grand master Salca for closer co-operation. The principal object of these negotiations was to occupy the Baltic shores and thus to join the two orders, in the operation against Lithuanians.

SVIATOSLAV, Grand duke of Novgorod, envying the continuous growth of Lithuanian might, mobilized all his forces; and, joined by Vladimir, Lev, and Demetri, duke of Druck, invaded



Lithuania, spreading terror and devastation. Rimgaudas rushed against the Slavs; and, on the fields off the city of Mogilna, engaged the enemies. A decisive battle ensued. The Slavs suffered so complete defeat, that, from that time on the power of the Slavs began declining, while the power of Lithuania continually increased.

In 1234, Jaroslaw won a local success in an open battle near the city Toropec; but, despite this reverse, the Lithuanians established definitely their superiority over Slavs, and became their masters. Utenis has built the castle of Utenai, and Bar or Barys, built the city of BORYSOV. Barys was the first Lithuanian duke to embrace Christianity. He married the daughter of the grand duke of Tver, and became the governor of Polock.

THE TIME CAME for a supreme test of the Teutonic-Lithuanian superiority. Rimgaudas realized the importance of the conjunction of the two Teutonic orders. To prevent juncture of the Teutonic orders, Rimgaudas decided to engage the enemies in a decisive battle separately. With this purpose in view, he mobilized a powerful army, and advanced against grand master Volkins. On St. Maurice day, in A. D. 1236, the Lithuanians took a field near the city of Kamna, where they awaited the approach of the Livonian knights. When the two powerful armies came face to face, their generals appeared before their men with messages.

In addressing his armies, grand master Volkins said: "This is the time for us to fight, our honor and religion demands that of us; having defeated them we will become their masters, having fallen in battle, we shall receive absolution of our sins and eternal happiness beyond; St. Maurice, patron of the day, help us to win the victory"—and the armies echoed: "St. Maurice help us today!"

Rimgaudas, addressing his men, said, in substance:—"My brave men, Lithuanian and Samogethian knights. We have come here today not for glory or loot, but to die in this place defending our freedom and liberties, from slavery. Our enemies have not come here to insure the salvation of our souls, but to convert us into their slaves. We have the best evidence of their purpose in the example of Padaugavenians, who being Christianized, are reduced to slaves, and their sons and daughters taken away from their parents, are being sent over the water to eternal slavery in the foreign lands. We shall die today or tomorrow, but will never taste the slavery,

but will either live or die free. For one, I shall never lay this sword, until the last enemy is driven from our lands. Our gods are our strength, and thou supreme god, Perkunas, who has created this world, and given life, freedom and liberty to men, give us courage in this great struggle and permit us to preserve freedom and liberty."

With these words, closing his message, Rimgaudas gave signal for battle, and at the head of the armies, rushed against the forces of grand master Volkins. Bloody battle ensued, and when the Teutonic lines began to waiver, Volkins, with a regiment of the picked knights attacked the Samogethians, in an effort to break their lines; but, hit on the head, fell off his horse, and the Teutons, seeing the fate of their chief, lost heart, fell back in disorder, pursued by Lithuanians and Samogethians.

In this decisive battle 20,000 Teutons fell on the field, among them generals Danneberg, Hasseldorff, and many other famous warriors. All Teutonic treasures, camp, arms, equipments and provisions fell into the Lithuanian hands, and the decimated Teutonic forces fled, spreading terror among their allies.—*Voigt, Preussen Geschichte, II, V, 336.*

The news of this great Teutonic disaster put fear in the Teutonic Crusaders hearts; and, an appeal went to pope, which resulted in a declaration of a holy war against Lithuania.

In the meantime, the Tartar chief, Kurdis Khan, having conquered the Slavs, invaded Lithuania. Treinaitis with Lubartas took the Tartars by surprise on the fields of Mozyr, near the River Okniauke. In the terrible battle that ensued, Prishmantas and Lubartas, dukes of Lutsch and Druck, fell in battle, but Treinaitis crushed Kurdis Khan definitely. The fleeing Tartars were drowned in Okniauke, and few escaped death.

Rimgaudas died, leaving Lithuanian possessions extended eastward and southward. But the war with the Teutonic Crusaders and the Livonian knights, supported by the Western world, continued uninterruptedly.

MINDOVE, FIRST CHRISTIAN KING OF LITHUANIA; TRADIS OR TRADENIS, GRAND DUKE OF SAMOGETHIA—WARS WITH SLAVS, POLES, MAZURES, CRUSADERS AND LIVONIAN KNIGHTS.

IN A. D. 1239, after the death of Rimgaudas the Great, a civil war broke out in Lithuania, originating in the ambitions of Mindove to ascend the throne of Lithuania, against the opposition of the Lithuanian senate, who favored duke Shventaragis for that of-



fice. Paving his way to the throne, Mindove, son of Rimgaudas, put to death dukes Gedvilla, Sprudeikis and Vishmontas. Having married the wife of Vishmontas, Mindove ascended the Lithuanian throne.

Internal strife in Lithuanian encouraged some Slavonic dukes to take advantage of the situation, and to slice off some provinces from Lithuania. First of all they invaded the lands of Kriviches, capturing its capital, Smolensk, and appointed Vsevolod its governor.

Mindove, desiring to subdue the Slavs, sent against them princes Arvida, Gedvida and Tautvilla. They defeated the Slavs, and took possession of the governments: Tautville proclaimed himself the duke of Polock; Gedvidis—duke of Vytebsk, and Arvidas—duke of Smolensk. To win the good will of the governed, these princes embraced Christianity, and proclaimed themselves the defenders of the rights and liberties of the countries.

Mindove, fearing that they might renounce their allegiance to Lithuania, and eventually seek the Lithuanian throne, began preparations for war against them. They, on the other hand, realizing, that without outside help, they could not withstand the Mindove might, sought help among the Slavonic dukes.

This caused renewal of a great war with all the neighbors, which eventually compelled Mindove to seek peace with Teutonic Crusaders and Livonian knights. In A. D. 1252 Mindove embraced Christianity, and was crowned King of Lithuania.

Mindove hoped that the acceptance of Christian religion would establish peace with the western world, but was greatly disappointed in this illusion. The Teutons took advantage of every opportunity, and finally demanded of Mindove, that after his death he assign the whole country to Teutons.

TRAIDENIS had no illusions as to the good will of the Teutons, and instead of entering into negotiations with them, strengthened his military defenses, and attacked his enemies with all his might. Deciding to drive the Teutons first from Parusnia, Traidenis engaged the Crusaders, and, following his successes, carried his victorious troops up to Kulmia.

Mindove, after suffering all the Teutonic insolence, got tired of their persistent dictations; and, renouncing Christianity, joined Traidenis in waging war on all enemies.

However, Mindove had undermined the faith of the people by his conduct, and after a stormy career, died from the hands of an assassin.

TRAIDENIS became the grand duke of Lithuania, and promised to revive the glorious traditions of Rimgaudas the great. Soon however, the hand of an assassin, ended the life of this great warrior and a Lithuanian patriot.

VALSTINIC, son of Mindove, a monk in a Slavonic monastery, to revenge the death of his father, was responsible for the death of Traidenis. With the aid of Slavonic dukes, he invaded Lithuania, and ascended the Lithuanian throne. The reign of terror again struck this unfortunate nation. But Valstinic was soon removed, also by the hand of an assassin.

Valstinic died Dec. 9, A. D. 1267.

GERIMANTAS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA.

WITH the death of Valstinic, ended the famous Nemunian dynasty of Lithuania which, with the exception of Valstinic and Mindove, had produced great patriots and warriors. Mindove himself, despite his misconduct in relation to other dukes, left grateful memory among his people, who appreciated his peaceful efforts, however empty they were of beneficial results.

Gerimantas was appointed by the Lithuanian senate the grand duke of Lithuania, in Kernava; and, after becoming the grand duke, lost his father, Szventaragas, whom he buried in a cemetery on the banks of Neris (Vilija) where today stands city of Vilna.

Gerimantas, like his predecessors, was occupied in a continuous war with Crusaders, Poles, Livonian knights, and Slavs. In A. D. 1274 Gerimantas concluded peace with Tierberg, grand master of Crusaders, under the terms of which he is said to have agreed not to interfere with the Teutonic aspirations in Parusnia.

Gerimantas is said to have left a son by the name Giliginis, who is said to have succeeded Gerimantas. In turn the son of Giliginis, Romanta, and later Trabis, governed Lithuania. Trabis was the founder of the castle of Trabiai. Likewise, Narmantas, Alshis, Daugmantas, and Gedraitis, are mentioned as the dukes of Lithuania. But, it is likely, these were only the governors of some provinces. Narmantas is credited with re-transfer of the Lithuanian capital, from Naujapilis again to Kernava. Narmantas, again was the duke of Karelia.



TRAIDIS OR TRIDIS, succeeded Gerimantas, and revived the glory of Erdvila and Rimgaudas. The Poles had conquered Paletia and annexed it to Poland. Traidis, who after the death of Gerimantas, in A. D. 1272, cleared Paletia of Poles, established Lithuanian sovereignty in that country. In the war with the Poles, general Gobeta entered Letuchia or Paletia, and recaptured Droichin. Traidis strengthening the Lithuanian borders, built a powerful castle, Raigrad, on the River Bobr. In 1277, Gen. Skumanta, devastated the entire country under Teutonic rule, and reached Kulmia. The Parusnians, aided by the Lithuanians endeavored to free themselves from the Teutonic rule; but, Lithuanian main forces, being engaged in the war with the Tartars, Poles and Slavs, were unable to deliver their Parusnian brethren.

#### BUIVIDIS OR VITIS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA.

After the death of Traidis, his general, Buividis, was appointed the grand duke of Lithuania. Crusaders, Livonian knights, Poles and Slavs, persisted in their efforts to conquer Lithuania. Livonia already was under Teutonic rule, while the Crusaders reached almost the banks of the River Niemen. Buividis with Butegeidis, defended the country against all enemies. But it seems, that, at that time, Lithuania lacked national unity, and different parts of the country had their own rulers. Hence arises a confusion of names, each pretending to be the grand duke of Lithuania.—Buividis died about 1291.

#### PUTUERUS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA.

After the death of Buividis Putuerus was appointed the grand duke of Lithuania. Putuerus, determined to deliver the Parusnians from the Teutonic rule, and to deliver a decisive blow at the Poles. He sent Vitenis, with a powerful army into Poland; and, before Polish princes had time to mobilize their forces Vitenis ravaged Kujaws. The Poles, attacked by Vitenis, invoked aid from the Crusaders. Vitenis defeated the combined Polish-Teutonic forces, and happily returned to Kernava. In A. D. 1300, the Lithuanian forces ravaged Varmia, wiping out all things Teutonic. In A. D. 1301, the Lithuanian armies went to the aid of the Polish king, Lokietek, and with 6,000 cavalry invaded Bobrzyn regions. From this they turned into Kulmia, where they encountered strong forces of Crusaders. and were compelled to discontinue the expedition.

#### VITENIS, SON OF LUTAVOR, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA; A. D. 1302—FOUNDER OF LUTAVOR DYNASTY IN LITHUANIA.

VITENIS was known throughout the country long before he became appointed the grand duke of Lithuania. His military qualities, along with his kindness and justice, won for him the fame of a great man. So, when Putuerus died, Vitenis was appointed as the logical man for this most responsible office in the country.

Despite his military genius, however, it was impossible to restore peace and tranquillity. Crusaders and Livonian knights drew reinforcements from all Western Europe. The continual aggression of the Poles and Slavs was equivalent to direct help for the Teutons. The Lithuanians, on the other hand, ruined by a continuous warfare, had to depend on their own resources only.

It must be noted, however, that, even under such unfavorable conditions, the Lithuanians held their own. The Crusaders, waging war since A. D. 1228, up to the times of Vitenis, succeeded in the occupation only a country extending from the River Vistula, up to the River Nieman, while the Livonian knights had made even smaller progress.

Vitenis died in A. D. 1315, leaving the country embattled on all sides.

#### GEDIMINAS THE GREAT, A. D. 1315-1340.

After the death of Vitenis, the Lithuanian senate assembled in Kernava, and appointed his son, Gediminas, governor of Trakai, to the office of the grand duke of Lithuania.

#### RISE OF LITHUANIA.

GEDIMINAS opened a new era in the history of Lithuania. He combined unprecedented military genius with supreme administrative abilities. His object in life was to establish peace in the country, secured through victory over his many enemies. Along with peace, he proposed to bring to the country prosperity, through development of country's natural resources and introduction of foreign trade. In order to secure victory, he proposed to effect a union of all the Lithuanian countries into one solid whole. He realized, that, a defensive warfare would only wear out the nation, and finally subject it to foreign rule. Therefore, he decided on the change of policy, and, instead of a defensive warfare, opened an aggressive campaign, striking fear in the hearts of his many enemies.

Three years after his ascension to the Lithuanian throne, in A. D. 1318,



Gediminas began delivering powerful blows at his most powerful enemies, the Teutonic crusaders. In that year, his famous general DOVETA, with a handful (800) of picked cavalry, entered Natangia, occupied by Crusaders, spreading terror with a swift movement, taking Teutonic garrisons and crushing all opposition. The successes of Doveta encouraged the subjugated Parusnian-Lithuanians to rise against their oppressors. Expedition of Doveta into Parusnia paralyzed the Teutonic plans; for, at times, with greater forces, Doveta crossed Parusnia and advanced beyond it, reaching even Brandenburg and Saxony. The Glory of the Lithuanian arms spread throughout Europe, striking terror into the hearts of her enemies. In 1319, the Crusaders endeavored to counter the plans of Gediminas, by entering Samogethia. But here, they suffered a decisive defeat, after which the Teutonic commander was compelled to seek a truce, which was concluded for a period of two years.

This disposition of the Teutonic menace afforded an opportunity for dealing in a decisive manner with the Russian Slavs. First he turned against Volhynia, and captured Vladimir. The whole of Volhynia acknowledged Lithuanian sovereignty and was annexed to Lithuania. In the same expedition, Gediminas turned against Russian dukes, who—in the times of the Lithuanian troubles with Crusaders and Livonian knights—occupied Lithuanian Getvingians. First on the way was duke Lew of Lutsk, who—learning of the might Gediminas had at his command,—fled to Severia. Gediminas occupied Lutsk without a battle. Then he redeemed Draichin and Brest, and joined Padalia with Lithuania.

Desiring to establish good order and insure peace and tranquillity in these possessions, Gediminas spent the entire winter in Brest, personally directing organizations of government, and the promulgation of laws to safeguard the rights and liberties of the people. At the same time he conducted there gigantic preparations for war, which included the manufacture of arms, munitions, and equipments, together with the accumulation of provisions. All wondered against whom Gediminas was preparing this mighty campaign; but, in the spring of 1321, the secret came out, when Gediminas proceeded into so called Black Russia; and, surrounding powerful fortress of Owicz, took it by storm. Then he turned against Zhitomir. In the battle of Zhitomir he met with a desperate resistance. But it availed nothing,

for the Russian nobility fell by thousands in the battle and Gediminas occupied the fortress. His next objective was Kiev, the capital of the Czars of all Russia. To save Kiev, the dukes of Lutsk, Perejaslav, and Briansk combined together, to intercept Gediminas.

These Russian dukes invoked the aid of the Tartars; and, intending to deliver a powerful blow at Gediminas, selected their own battlefield on the banks of the river Pirnes. The famous Russian warrior, Sviatoslaw, hoping to win the laurels single handed, advanced against the approaching Gediminas. When Gediminas learned from his intelligence men of the plans of Sviatoslaw, he decided to crush him in one stroke. To inspire his warriors with confidence, Gediminas ordered his army together, and appearing before the camp, he delivered the following message:—"It is not necessary that I give words of encouragement or praise your valor, or remind you of the victories you have won in the many battles with the innumerable enemies of your country. It will suffice that you look at your own healing wounds, to remind you of all the glorious days when the uncouraged enemies of your country went in defeat before your mighty arms. If ever, today you might rest assured of a complete victory, for you will meet not steel armoured Teutonic knighthood, but only crumbling Slavs. In the battle, remember, that you are Lithuanians and have an opportunity to avenge all wrongs done to your country by these enemies, and to redeem from foreign rule the country, in which your great ancestors, the Scythians, once enjoyed perfect freedom and liberty."

Having thus stimulated the spirit of his warriors, Gediminas gave orders to proceed against Sviatoslaw. Soon the armies of Sviatoslaw appeared, and Gediminas gave signal, to blow trumpets for the battle. In the initial engagement, the first Lithuanian regiment, tired by a long march, began to give way, but Gediminas rushed reinforcements, in time, and the battle was renewed with unprecedented ferocity. The first Lithuanian regiment, that gave way at the start, attacked the flank of the enemy with such impetus that the Russian lines were broken. Seeing disaster threatening Sviatoslaw, dukes Alga Perjaslaw, Roman, and other generals, rushed to the aid of Sviatoslaw, whose men were in flight. The reinforcements revived hope in the Russian hearts. They saw a chance of wresting the victory from the Lithuanians, with whom they once plowed their fields,—and who now proposed to become their masters. But



the accounting has come; and, after the whole day battle, the Russian forces were destroyed. Sviatoslaw and Roman barely escaped the fate suffered by other dukes and their army.

The Lithuanians, having buried dead at night, appeared before the walls of Kiev at daybreak. The inhabitants of Kiev, although they numbered 400,000, seeing what had happened to their czar, Sviatoslaw, and all the Russian armies, lost heart and resigned themselves to the inevitable fate. Sviatoslaw, their czar, utterly defeated, fled from the country. The Kievians opened the gates of the city, and their church heads—with clergy and dignitaries—appeared before the principal gate to meet Gediminas, and to acknowledge him their master.

Gediminas on his part, promised to respect their religion, customs, manners and liberties, and to insure justice and order. To inspire good will among Slavs, Gediminas appointed duke Mintautas, who had already embraced Christianity, the governor of Kiev. Wise and honest Gediminas realized that the Slavs would feel offended if they were governed by princes of a different religion. Therefore, he followed the traditional Lithuanian policy, to give the governed the rule most fitted to their spiritual and national needs. Thus, not only the White Russians, or Kriviches, became Lithuanian dependents, but also the Black Russians came under Lithuanian rule. They were governed by Slavonic princes, appointed by the grand duke of Lithuania, but recognized Lithuanian sovereignty and authority.—*Karamzin. Vol. IV. Ch. VIII, p. 179.*

On the same expedition, Gediminas occupied the cities of Bialograd, Slepovrat, Kana and Cherkas, where he left Lithuanian garrisons and proceeded against Servia. In two year campaign he conquered Servia, occupied Briansk and Perjaslav, and thus became the master of all Russia. The Russian Slavs who, after almost 500 years of the occupation of the lands of ancient Lithuanians, Scythians and Sarmatians, became the subjects of Lithuania.

#### POLISH-LITHUANIAN ALLIANCE.

**W**HILE the power of Lithuania became a factor of peace and tranquillity, and the hope of alien enemies to conquer Lithuania died away, Poland, which was responsible for the introduction of the Teutonic Crusaders, found itself on the verge of collapse.

#### INTERNAL STRIFE IN POLAND.

This was the result of a division of Poland, by Boleslaus Krzywousty, in 1138, among his sons, and kept Poland in a stage of anarchy and chaos for 167 years. In 1325, Polish king, Wladyslaus Lokietek, was menaced by his rivals to the throne, as well as by Teutonic Crusaders.

This wise Polish king realized, that, without establishing peace with the now powerful Lithuania, the fate of Poland was to hang in the balance. Therefore, attacked by his rivals, Lokietek told them: "I will ally myself with powerful Gediminas." So, in A. D. 1325, Lokietek approached the grand duke of Lithuania, on the proposition of concluding a defensive alliance between Lithuania and Poland.

Gediminas, whose sole object in life was peace and tranquillity for his country, accepted the proposal, and the negotiations resulted in concluding a treaty. Lokietek came to Vilna, then the capital of Lithuania, built by Gediminas. To cement the ties of friendship between Lithuania and Poland, the two monarchs decided on the marriage of their children. Princess Aldona, daughter of Gediminas, became the wife of prince Casimir, son of Lokietek. This Casimir, after the death of Lokietek, became the king of Poland, and won the title of "king of peasants." On this occasion, Gediminas released 40,000 Polish prisoners of war, who escorted Aldona on her way to the Polish capital. *Annals, Olive, l. c.*

Gediminas, desiring to insure peace with all Slavs, to give him better chance to crush the Teutons, sent his brother, Mainis, governor of Polock, with Theodore, governor of Minsk, to Novgorod the Great, to negotiate a treaty of peace. In A. D. 1326 Mainis and Theodore returned from Novgorod, bringing the renewed treaty, insuring peace to Lithuania from that side.—*Karamzin. Vol. IV, ch. VIII, p. 179.*

#### RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES WITH TEUTONS.

When the news of the Lithuanian alliances with Slavs reached Teutonic Crusaders and Livonian knights, they realized the inevitable fate awaiting them. At first they tried to disrupt peace among the Lithuanians and Slavs; but, failing in that, they began preparations for war before Lithuania had time to consolidate her advantages.

Lithuania likewise, prepared itself for a final account with the Teutonic invaders. Poland, in the meantime, engaged the Crusaders, and Brandenburgians. Gediminas sent reinforce-



ments to Poland under the famous general Doveta.

Doveta, with 10,000 crack cavalry, crossed Parusnia, then Pomerania, and then crossed the River Audra (Oder) and entered Brandenburg, once inhabited by the Lithuanian people, Heruli. Having devastated Brandenburg, Doveta crossed the river Laba (Elbe), and spread terror in Saxony and the whole Teutonia.

Doveta returned home from this successful expedition, bringing thousands of prisoners of war among whom, it is said, there were 6,000 girls. On the way home, they ravaged Mazuria, as a country allied with Teutons. There, Doveta, involving himself in a quarrel for a woman, was treacherously murdered by a Mazurian nobleman, Andrew Gast. The Lithuanian armies, discouraged by the death of their famous general, returned to Vilna, bringing prisoners and a rich loot.—*Kosebue, Preuss. alt Gesch. Vol. II, ch. 21.*

The success of Doveta's expedition prompted Lithuanians to follow their victories by sending Algirdas (Olgerd), the oldest son of Gediminas, into Brandenburg again. In A. D. 1327, Algirdas, with a powerful army, passed through Parusnia, crossed the river Vistula, then the Oder, and again entered Brandenburg and surrounded Frankfurt, the capital of Brandenburg. While he engaged and defeated duke Valdemar of Brandenburg, his regiments ravaged Saxony, intercepting and destroying reinforcements sent from the Western Europe to Crusaders.—*Kojalowicz, Hist. Litwy., Vol. I.*

In the meantime, other Lithuanian armies ravaged Podaugavia (Livonia). The Latvians, seeing victorious Lithuanians battering their enemies, arose against their oppressors, and joined the Lithuanian forces. It seemed that the end of the Teutonic rule, both in Podaugavia and in Parusnia, was at an end. In the face of such grave possibilities for the Teutons, they began strengthening their garrisons, and built new fortresses. Threatening disaster to Crusaders and Livonian knights incited the pope, who again organized in Western Europe powerful forces, in all Christian lands, and sent them to the rescue of the Crusaders and Livonians.

In one of the battles with the Crusaders, in A. D. 1338, Gediminas, pierced by a spear, fell mortally wounded. Before his death, Gediminas called together his children, and wished them to live in harmony and love, and to redeem all Lithuanian lands from a foreign rule.

#### CHILDREN OF GEDIMINAS.

**G**EDIMINAS had four daughters and eight sons. Aldona, the oldest daughter, was married to prince Casimir of Poland; second, Danute, married to Venceslaus, prince of Mazuria; third, Aiguste, married Simon Dmitriev, duke of Moscow; and the fourth, whose name is not known, married Doveta, grand marshal of Lithuania. His sons were: Mentsvid, governor of Kernava and Slonim; Narmonth, governor of Karelia, Pinsk and Mozyr; Algirdas, governed Krivichia and Whitre Russia, up to the river Berezina; Keistutis, governed Samogethia, Trakia, Grodna, Kauna, Upita or Panevez, Paletians or Letvezhians; Karjotas, governed Naujapile (Novogrodek), with Vilkavishki and Volhynia; Lubart governed Red Russia and Padalia; Jaunutis, the youngest, governed Vilna, capital of Lithuania, Ashmena, Vilkmerge and Braslava.

#### JAUNUTIS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA.

In deference to the wishes of Gediminas, the Lithuanian senate, assembled in Vilna, in 1338, having buried Gediminas, has appointed the youthful Jaunutis grand duke of Lithuania. Until the maturity of the youthful duke, Algirdas and Keistutis were appointed military and political governors. This arrangement seemed to satisfy all, but soon contingencies arose which demanded a change in government of country.

The death of Gediminas revived the hopes, of all Lithuanian enemies, of conquering not only Lithuanian possessions, but Lithuania proper and Samogethia. Crusaders, Livonian knights, Poles, Russians and Tartars raised their arms against Lithuania.

Under such circumstances, Algirdas and Keistutis realized, that the rule of Jaunutis would mean encouragement to the enemies of the country, and cost continuous bloodshed and devastation of the land. For the good of the country, they decided to depose Jaunutis and to take the government in their powerful hands. On Nov. 22, 1345, Keistutis took Vilna by ruse, and arrested Jaunutis. Soon came Algirdas to Vilna with his forces. To show the people, that, they have made this *coup-d'etat* not for personal ambitions, but for the good of the country, neither of them wanted to become the grand duke. Finally, they agreed to govern the country jointly. They appointed Jaunutis the governor of Braslava, where he spent the balance of his life.



ALGIRADS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA,  
(1345-1377).

THE reign of Algirdas, supported by his brother, Keistutis, revived the glory of Gediminas. The Lithuanian arms became invincible, and the rule of Teutons in Parusnia and Livonia, was greatly shackened. The most spectacular expedition however, was that against Moscow. On Dec. 6, 1370, Algirdas and Keistutis appeared before the walls of Moscow, and established their camp on the hill. The campaign against Moscow ended in a treaty of peace, and the marriage of the daughter of Algirdas Anastazia, with Vladimir, the nephew of Dmitri, grand duke of Moscow. This took place June 15, 1371.

It is impossible to go into details of the events of this glorious era, as it involves the affairs of the whole of Europe, and would necessitate a separate volume. Suffice to say, that, having reached an age when the burden of the affairs of the state was too heavy for him to carry, he appointed his youngest son, Jagello, successor to the throne.

The Lithuanian empire extended then from the Baltic to the Black sea, and from the rivers Bug and Danube, to the Rivers Don and Ugra. Algirdas established laws and order, which governed that country for over 400 years after his death.

Algirdas left 12 sons. By his first wife, Julia, princess of Vitebsk:—Igautas, governor of Polock; Narmantas, governor of Bielsk; Shedvidis, governor of Ostraga; Lengvenas, governor of Volhynia; Vasili, governor of Chernihov; and Olelka, governor of Kiev. By his second wife, Marie, princess of Tver:—Karebutas, Skirgalius, Karigalius, Svetigalius (Svetregalius or Svidrigalius), Mingalius and Jaugalius (Jagello). From these princes sprang the houses of Galicins, Kurokins, Sangushkas, Lubomirskis, Koreckis, Kozelskis, Jablonowskis, Zbaraskis, Kovanskis, Trubeckis, Kovelskis, Koszirkis, and many other aristocratic families, which became the leaders in the affairs of Russia and Poland.

JAGELLO (JAUGALIS) GRAND DUKE OF  
LITHUANIA, (1377-1381).

After the death of Algirdas, the Lithuanian senate assembled in Vilna, in deference to the wishes of their late grand duke, and appointed Jaugalius, (Jagello) grand duke of Lithuania.

Taking advantage of the inexperience in the affairs of state, of the youthful grand duke of Lithuania, Teutonic Crusaders began intrigues, aiming at the creation of discord between Jagello and

Keistutis. They endeavored to induce Jagello to embrace Christianity, promising to respect peace in his possessions. Keistutis was their greatest enemy; and, with the aid of Jagello, they endeavored to destroy Keistutis, and eventually, to occupy his possessions.

These intrigues led to open hostility between Jagello and Keistutis. When, at last, Keistutis discovered a secret compact between Teutons and Jagello, he decided to curb the evil consequences, that were developing.

In A. D. 1381, Keistutis secured undisputable proof of the existence of secret agreements between Crusaders and Livonian knights, on one side, and Jagello, on the other, calculated to effect a destruction of the rule of Keistutis, in Samogethia, and to subject that country to the Teutonic masters. Thereupon Keistutis, with strong force surrounded Vilna, capital of Lithuania; and, having captured it, placed Jagello under arrest, and Vaidele, who was the cause of all troubles, was ordered to be hanged on the same day. Searching the office of Jagello, Keitutis found the original compact with the Teutons, signed with his own hand by Jagello. This was the act of treason against the country, and Keistutis ordered Jagello put in chains.

KEITUTIS, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA,  
(1381-1382).

THE fame of Keitutis rang not only throughout Lithuania, but throughout all Europe. No greater knight ever lived. Irreconcilable foe of Crusaders and Livonian knights, he spent his life in defending the country on all fields. His virtues, courage and military qualities won for him the love of the entire country, which was greatly rejoiced when he assumed the office of the grand duke.

The fate of Jagello was decided by his acts, but Vytautas, son of Keitutis, was a busom friend of Jagello, his first cousin, and at his instance, Keitutis freed his nephew, forgetting his treachery, and appointed him governor of Vytebsk. Vytautas accompanied Jagello to Vytebsk, and all seemed well.

Jagello, however, corrupted by the Teutonic intrigues to the core, planned revenge against Keitutis, and again allied himself with Teutonic knights. Civil war broke out, and Keitutis was forced to use force again to overpower irrepentant Jagello. When the armies of Jagello and Keitutis met for a battle, Jagello sent his brother Skirgela, to the camp of his uncle, Keitutis, proposing negotiations, and again promising



to restore friendly relations, and jointly work for the best interests of the common country.

Keitutis unsuspecting any foul play, took his son, Vytautas, and went to the camp of Jagello. They were greatly surprised when, upon entering the camp, they were surrounded by the soldiers of Jagello and Crusaders. When Keitutis demanded what this meant, and requested Jagello to proceed with negotiations, Jagello replied: "Here is no time nor place for negotiations, we will attend to business in Vilna."

Keitutis then found how horribly he had been deceived, but it was too late. Skirgalius in the meantime, went to the camp of Keitutis, and advised the army, that the dukes are going to Vilna, to conduct negotiations, and the army has nothing to do, and may return home. No one expected such a foul play, and the army of Keitutis disbanded.

As soon as they reached Vilna, Jagello ordered Keitutis put in chains, and sent to the castle of Krevo. Four days later, Skirgalius went to Krevo, but found that Proxa, an assassin hired by Jagello, had Keitutis put to death.

His son, Vytautas, escaped the fate of his father, by a sacrifice of girl, by name, Mirga, who changed clothes with Vytautas, and took his place in the cell, whereby Vytautas, in her garb, succeeded in escaping.

JAGELLA, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA, (1382-1392).

WHEN Vytautas escaped from the cell in the castle of Krevo, where Jagello intended to end his life, he at once went to his brother-in-law, Janush, duke of Mazuria. From that time internal strife raged in Lithuania. Vytautas, determined to avenge the death of his father and mother, and depose the treacherous Jagello from Lithuanian throne, won the sympathy of the entire nation. On the other hand, Jagello was in power, and had the support of his brothers. Vytautas, enjoying sympathy of the entire nation, became the powerful foe of Jagello. After many unsuccessful efforts, Vytautas became finally master of Samogethia, and threatened to overpower Jagello, and proclaim himself the grand duke of Lithuania.

By this time, developments in Poland promised Jagello the Polish throne. Envoys came from Poland, proposing marriage with their queen, Jadwiga. Civil war was bound to spoil all the plans of Jagello; and, for this reason, he changed his policies, and sought to restore peace and tranquility in his country. In 1385 an understanding was reached between

Vytautas and Jagello; and, the next year, Jagello married the Polish queen, and became the king of Poland.

### JAGELLONIAN ERA.

JAGELLO, KING OF POLAND (1386-1434).

Upon his marriage with the Polish queen, Jagello, in 1387, was crowned as king of Poland, and thus became the founder of the Jagellonian dynasty in Poland, which ruled to the year 1572.

This era, Polish historians define as the "Golden Epoch in the History of Poland." Lithuanians define it as a Decline of Lithuania.

SKIRGELA (SKIRGALIUS), ACTING GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA (1387-1392).

IN 1387, Jagello, departing for Poland, appointed his brother, Skirgela, acting grand duke of Lithuania. On his way to Poland, Jagello without consent of the Lithuanian senate, appointed Kreslaw Kuroswanski, governor of Lutsk, which was against the laws and traditions, since no Pole had a right to hold an office in Lithuania.

This incident created discontent among the Lithuanians, and from this came to open hostilities. Skirgela, on the other hand, was disliked by the nation, for his misconduct.

In the meantime, Vytautas, distinguished hero, and the son of the beloved Keitutis, lived quietly in the city of Lutsk.

For several years the country enjoyed peace and tranquillity, but the Polish-Lithuanian alliance, resulting from the marriage of Jagello with Jadwiga, was looked upon by Crusaders and Livonian knights with apprehension and fear. They sought an opportunity to create dissension in Lithuania, and eventually to stir trouble between Lithuania and Poland.

Such an opportunity they found in the conduct of Skirgela; who, instead of attending to the affairs of the country, indulged in luxuries, while Vytautas, having only one little province in his authority, had to take care of the affairs of the nation.

This situation brought complaints from Vytautas, especially because he was denied the rule of Samogethia, his father's domain. To all remonstrances Jagello turned a deaf ear; and instead of redress, he began the persecution of all the friends of Vytautas. Wrongs suffered from Jagello and Skirgela became unbearable, and Vytautas determined to bring them to accounting. Civil war broke out.

In the meantime Poland became involved in wars with her neighbors, Bo-



hemians, Austrians, Hungarians and Crusaders, who decided on the partition of Poland. Vytautas by that time had in his possession all Lithuania, excepting Vilna. Jagella realized that further resistance to Vytautas would be of no avail, and only jeopardize the existence of Poland, which became his country. Negotiations were opened, and Jagello tendered to Vytautas the throne of the grand duchy of Lithuania. This satisfied the ambitions of Vytautas, who thereupon concluded peace with Jagella.

ALEXANDER I VYTAUTAS (WITOLD), GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA (1392-1430).

THE best traditions of Gediminas the Great, and Algirdas (Olgerd), were surpassed by the reign of Vytautas, the Grand duke of Lithuania. The first years of the reign of Vytautas were marked by disaffection toward him on the part of the dukes springing from the house of Algirdas. The brothers of Jagello resented the sovereignty of Vytautas and rebelled. Casimir Svidrigalius aspired for the Lithuanian throne, while Boleslaus Svidrigalius, brother of Jagella, considered himself the rightful successor to Jagella. These princes ruled the Russian Slavs, were confident of their power to dethrone Vytautas. Internal strife encouraged the Crusaders, who invaded Lithuania and occupied Suraz and Gradna. In the meantime, Karjebutas, governor of Severia; Vladimir, governor of Kiev; and Karjotas, governor of Padalia, renounced allegiance to Vytautas.

Vytautas realized that the first thing for him to do, was to establish his authority in the entire country, and to bring the insurgents to accounting. He mobilized powerful forces in Lithuania and Samogethia, and turned against Karjebutas who, allied with the duke of Rezan, defied the authority of Vytautas. Vytautas, at the head of his army, proceeded against Karjebutas, and met the enemy in the vicinity of a city of Niekunda, in the present government of Kaluga, and engaged Karjebutas on the banks of the river Techie. After a bloody battle, which crushed the might of Karjebutas, Karjebutas fled to Novgorod, followed by Vytautas, who took this powerful fortress by storm and Karjebutas became his prisoner. Vytautas put Karjebutas in irons and sent him to Jagello in Poland, while his wife and children were sent to Vilna and there locked up in the castle.

This brought entire Severia under the rule of Vytautas, who appointed prince Sangushka its governor. Karjebutas

soon won pardon; and, upon taking an oath of allegiance to Vytautas and his successors, was appointed governor of Padalian cities, Braslavice, Vinnica, Kremienec and Sakolec. Later Karjebutas built cities of Zbarazh and Wisniewice, from where princes of Zbaraz and Wisniewieckis hailed. One of the descendants of these Wisniewieckis, Michael Korybut Wisniewiecki, was elected king of Poland.

Svidrigalius, defeated by Vytautas, went to the Crusaders, where he was gladly received by grand master Conrad von Juningen. There the campaign against Lithuania was planned out, and the knighthood from Austria, Silesia, Teutonia, France and England came to Parusnia, seeking adventure. Vytautas, having restored peace in Severia, rushed against these Teutonic allies who, with Svidrigalius, had invaded Lithuania and approached its capital, Vilna. In an open battle, near Vilna, Vytautas crushed his enemies, and the Teutons fled leaving 30,000 dead on the battlefield.

The fate of Svidrigalius and Karjebutas did not frighten Vladimir, governor of Kiev, who refused to obey Vytautas, and determined to resist his authority with force of arms. Vytautas, having disposed of Svidrigalius, with his Teutonic allies, turned against Vladimir of Kiev. First of all, he occupied the fortresses of Ovruch and Zitomir, and turned them unto Skirgalius. Then he advanced against Vladimir who, with a powerful army, awaited Vytautas. Both sides were preparing for a battle, when suddenly came a special envoy from Jagello, who opened negotiations between the belligerents, and effected peace. Vladimir, son of Algirdas, surrendered Kiev to his brother Skirgalius, and retained for himself castle of Kopil, with surrounding regions. Later he built there city of Sluck, which was known after his son, Alexander Olelko. From this Alexander Olelko originated famous Lithuanian family, known as dukes of Sluck, which distinguished itself in the wars with Tartars.

Vytautas, having appointed Skirgalius governor of Kiev, ordered him to take from the Tartars the fortresses of Cherkask and Zvinegard. This being done, Skirgalius returned to Kiev.

Karjotas, governor of Padalia, with the aid of Valakians, hoped to withstand the might of Vytautas, and refused to acknowledge his authority. Vytautas advanced against Karjotas, and engaged him in a battle near the city of Braslava. Karjotas, defeated in an open battle, fled to Kremienec, which Vytautas took by storm and, having definitely de-



feated Karjotas, restored Padalia to Lithuania.

#### EXPEDITION AGAINST TARTARS.

Vytautas was attending to affairs in Smolensk, when a Tartaric khan, Tochtamysh came to him asking for a help against Timur, who had conquered the whole of Asia and driven Tochtamysh out. Vytautas, appreciating the menace growing out of the increasing might of the conqueror of Beset, decided to restore Tochtamysh in power in his own domain. With this purpose in view, he divided his army. He sent one division, under the leadership of his brother, Lengvenas, against Rezan, who had been responsible for all the Russian uprisings; and another, under the leadership of a famous general, Algardas, against Timur, across the steppes of Volga and Don.

While Lengvenas traversed Rezan, without opposition, and occupied the regions between the rivers Oko and Don; Algardas, having crossed deserts, opened camp upon the banks of the river Don.

Algardas soon realized that he had advanced too far, for he learned that three khans were advancing against him with huge armies. It was, however, too late to retreat, and Algardas determined to defeat the enemy or die. In the bloody battle that ensued, Algardas destroyed the Tartaric armies. All treasures, arms and equipment fell into Lithuanian hands. Crowned with such a glorious victory, Algardas appeared before Vytautas, in Smolensk.

These continuous victories struck terror into the hearts of Lithuanian enemies, and laid a foundation for the glorious reign of Vytautas.

Returning to Vilna, Vytautas took with him along Tochtamysh, with his entire family and troops, and ordered that they be maintained at the expense of the state. Thus he established Tartaric colonies in Lithuania, placing some of them in the environs of Vilna, others about Trakai, Minsk and Gradna.

#### POLISH-LITHUANIAN CONTROVERSY.

**A**FTER restoring peace and tranquillity in Lithuania, Vytautas decided to close accounts with Crusaders and Livonian knights, and to drive them out of Parusnia and northern Lithuania, or Livonia.

During the preparations for a war with the Crusaders and Livonian knights Vytautas received a letter from the wife of Jagello, Polish queen, Jadwiga, in which she advised Vytautas, that Jagwello had assigned to her the whole of Lithuania, as a dowry; and, on these

grounds, demanded tribute from Vytautas.

This insolent letter enraged Vytautas, who at once convened the Lithuanian senate in Vilna; and, having personally read the letter of Jadwiga, he asked senators if any one ever heard of Lithuanians and Samogethians paying tribute to Poland, or the right of Jagello, to assign the country. The answer was a unanimous "No." So, in 1398, Vytautas decided to prepare for eventualities and, with this purpose in view, entered into a treaty with the Crusaders.

In 1401 Jagello came to Vilna, and convened a diet, with the object of forming an alliance between Lithuania and Poland. By the treaty concluded in Vilna at that time, Lithuania became allied with Poland, with all the consequences that followed.

Alliance with Poland opened an opportunity to Vytautas, to settle the accounts with Crusaders; and, in the battle of Gruenwald, near Tanneburg, July 10, 1410, Vytautas delivered a crushing defeat to the Teutonic order of the knights of the Cross. Were not the relations with Poland dangerous to Lithuania, Vytautas, having destroyed the might of Conrad von Juningen, grand master of Crusaders, would have wiped out the entire order and cleared Parusnia of Teutons. But Polish persistence, in extending its rule over Lithuania, induced Vytautas to reserve the Teutonic forces for future emergencies with Poland.

In 1413, after the victory over the Crusaders, the Polish-Lithuanian diet was convened in the city of Orodle, on the river Bug, in Lithuania, where closer relations between Lithuania and Poland were formed.

Vytautas, having established his authority in his vast possessions, and settled accounts with Crusaders, directed his attention to peaceful pursuits of the life of his nation. First of all, he determined to introduce Christianity in Lithuania. Following this course, he went to Samogethia, where on the hill of Shatrya, burned eternal fire to Perkunas. He extinguished this fire, and founded the Roman Catholic church, in Luke, near Shatrya, which remains to this day. He built churches in Betigala, Krazhiai, Raseiniai, Vidukle, Veliuona, Kaltinenai, Varniai and Cetra or Seda.

#### EXPEDITION AGAINST NOVGOROD THE GREAT.

The expedition against Novgorod the Great, executed with the efficiency characterizing all deeds of Vytautas, resulted in the recognition by Novgorod



the Great of the Lithuanian sovereignty, and the payment of tribute to the grand duke of Lithuania.

#### VYTAUTAS APPOINTED PROTECTOR OF CHRISTIANITY.

The glory of Vytautas reached its zenith, when he convened a Synod of the orthodox church in Naujapile, and effected a reconcilliation of the Roman and the Orthodox churches. In appreciation of the glorious achievements, the emperor, during his attendance of the Concillium of Constancia appointed Vytautas the protector of the Christian world.

#### VYTAUTAS CODIFIES LAWS.

Possibly the most important achievement of Vytautas was the introduction of the statutes, according to which his vast empire was governed. For several centuries Lithuania, Poland and Russia were governed according to the laws of Vytautas.

#### CORONATION OF VYTAUTAS.

The danger to Lithuania, arising out of Polish-Lithuanian alliance prompted Vytautas to seek the crown of king of Lithuania. The emperor and the pope agreed to that; and the crown was being sent to Vytautas, who for this occasion arranged a great celebration in the city of Lutske, where he resided. The Poles, however, fearing the separation of Lithuania from Poland, intercepted the crown and blasted the hopes of Vytautas. This so discouraged the aged grand duke, that he took ill, and on Oct. 27, 1430, expired.

#### LITHUANIAN EMPIRE LEFT BY VYTAUTAS THE GREAT.

**L**ITHUANIAN rule at the time of death of Vytautas extended over 24 provinces, as follows: 1) Vilna; 2) Vitebsk; 3) Pskov; 4) Novgorod; 5) Smolensk; 6) Mohylev; 7) Chernihov; 8) Kiev; 9) Pultava; 10) Kaluga; 11) Voronezh; 12) Ekaterinoslav; 13) Sloboda; 14) Ukraina; 15) Kherson; 16) Volhynia; 17) Padalia; 18) Minsk; 19) Gradna; 20) Bialostock; 21) Podlase; 22) Augustovo; 23) Polinia, and 24) Sudauja.

With Vytautas died Lithuanian glory. Whatever took place afterwards, was the result of the Polish policies. Yet, the technical sovereignty of Lithuania continued for 142 years more, until the last grand duke of Lithuania, Sigismunt August, died in 1572. To continue the chain of rulers of the country, it is necessary to mention the successors to Vytautas, as follows:

#### SVIDRIGELA (1430-1432).

Svidrigela is familiar figure, who, during the time of Vytautas, was the cause of so much trouble to the country. His ascension, to the throne of the grand duke of Lithuania, was the signal for a new internal strife, which ended his career in 1432.

#### SIGISMUNT I, SON OF KEISTUTIS, (1432-1440).

Rivalry between the houses of Algirdas and Keistutis was responsible for the stormy career of Sigismunt I. Adherents of Jaugalius could not suffer the rule of house of Keistutis and, after eight years of stormy career, he met his death at the hands of assassins. His son, Michael, who should have inherited the rule, was defeated by Jagellonians, who feared separation of Lithuania from Poland.

#### ANDREW CASIMIR JAGELLONIAN, (1440-1492).

After the destruction of the house of Keistutis, Jagellonians became indisputable title holders to the Lithuanian throne. Under such circumstances, Andrew Casimir, son of Jagello, was appointed grand duke of Lithuania. In 1444, the Poles elected Casimir to the Polish throne, after the death of their king, son of Jagello, Wladyslaus, who lost his life in the battle of Varna.

The period under the rule of Casimir Jagellonian was marked by the introduction into Lithuania of the Polish influence. The affairs of Lithuania were being neglected. Casimir, seeking the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia for his sons, was involved in wars, in which the Lithuanians were forced to participate. One of his achievements was annexation of East Prussia to Poland. This country, occupied by Teutons, was inhabited by Lithuanians who, for over two hundred years, continued a hopeless struggle against their oppressors. Lithuania carried on the war with Crusaders, in the hope of redeeming Prussia; but Casimir Jagellonian, in using Lithuanian arms against Crusaders, served only the interests of Poland, and not of the natives of Parusnia or of Lithuania.

Continuous wars on the western fields left Lithuanian eastern borders open to the attack of Moscow Slavs who, taking advantage of this situation, invaded Lithuanian possessions—and, one by one, annexed them to Moscow. Thus began the rise of the czar of Moscow.



ALEXANDER, GRAND DUKE OF LITHUANIA  
(1492-1506) AND THE KING OF POLAND  
(1501-1506).

THE reign of Alexander, the grand duke of Lithuania, was marked by wars with Moscow and the Tartars. In all these wars Poland failed to contribute any assistance to Lithuania. In 1506 Tartaric khans invaded Lithuania with an army of 50,000. Alexander, then ill, mobilized the Lithuanian army. Under general Mikolas Glinskis, the Tartars were defeated.

The news of Lithuanian victory over the Tartars reached Alexander, in Vilna, where he was confined to bed; and on August 19, 1506, he expired.

SIGISMUNT II, THE OLD (1506-1544).

Alexander was succeeded by his brother Sigismunt, who soon was elected to the Polish throne.

One of his chief achievements was the appointment of a commission of 10, for the revision of the Lithuanian statute.

Wars with Tartars and Moscovites continued with ever changing fortunes. Despite many heroic deeds, on the part of many Lithuanian generals, Lithuanian might and prestige were declining. Briansk, with the greater part of Severia, were lost; likewise Smolensk. The nobility had grown wealthy, but its usefulness as defenders of the country was at an end. The luxury and splendor of the nobility necessitated the introduction of special privileges, whereby the masses of the people became exploited. Under this reign serfdom began in Lithuania and Poland. Sigismunt II died in 1548.

SIGISMUNT AUGUST, GRAND DUKE OF  
LITHUANIA (1544-1572) KING  
OF POLAND (1548-1572).

IN 1544, Sigismunt the Old appointed his son, Sigismunt August, the grand duke of Lithuania. Four years later Poland elected him to that throne.

The chief achievement of Sigismunt August was the bringing about of the union between Lithuania and Poland, by the treaty of Lublin, in 1569. Another great achievement was winning of Livonia for Lithuania, in 1568.

By the treaty of Lublin, Lithuania lost to Poland the provinces of Volhynia, Podolie and Kiev. Livonia was divided between Lithuania and Poland.

The diet of Lublin, which was responsible for effecting this dismemberment of Lithuania, continued for nine months. Polish efforts to extend their policies over Lithuania caused a disruption of the diet. In the absence of the Lithuanian representatives, Poles en-

tered into negotiation with the representatives of Lithuanian possessions, and severed from Lithuania the provinces above named. Sigismunt August angered by the departure of the Lithuanian envoys from Lublin, exclaimed: "Since Lithuanians are absent, I will make the union 'in contumaciam' ". After severing Volhynia, Kiev and Podolie from Lithuania, the Poles concluded a separate treaty with Prussia. Lithuania, then engaged in a war with Moscow, was threatened by the Poles with a war in case of refusal to form a union. Under such circumstances negotiations were renewed and the treaty concluded, by virtue of which Lithuania ceased to exist as an independent political entity.

DECLINE AND FALL OF POLAND.

SINCE the union of Lublin, the history of Lithuania became a part of the history of Poland. It continued so until the last partition of Poland, in A. D. 1795. It is therefore necessary to include that period in the outlines of the history of Lithuania.

The briefness of this outline did not permit the mention of the fact, that, the Jagello-Jadwiga romance, which brought about the Polish-Lithuanian alliance, by the marriage of the Polish queen with the grand duke of Lithuania, was peculiar in this, that the question of love was entirely disregarded in this romance for while Jadwiga was passionately in love, this love did not belong to Jagella but to a German prince, Wilhelm, to whom she was engaged in childhood. This loveless union of the royal couple characterized the whole relationship of Poland to Lithuania. Political expediency—and the desire for power—were the sole motives of the Poles in entering into union with Lithuania. But, while technically the two entirely different nations were joined together, there never existed a real unity of spirit. This condition soon developed into a cause which led to the fall of Poland.

First of all, it must be remarked, that, rivalry for the throne became the source of a continuous strife. In consequence, the kings were chosen among the foreign princes.

HENRY VALOIS (1574).

After two years of interregnum, a French prince, Henry Valois was appointed as the king of Poland. After six months he fled from Poland, leaving behind him chaos and anarchy.

STEFAN BATORY, TRANSYLVANIAN  
(1576-1586).

Batory was a much better choice. While he lacked administrative abilities, en-



his military qualities were undisputably great. Especially in the war with Moscow, Batory proved himself a boon to the country he governed.

SIGISMUNT III. WASA (1587-1632).

Sigismunt III, Wasa, was a Swedish prince born of a Lithuanian (Jagellonian princess) mother. Introduction of Swedish royalty into Poland resulted in an entanglement with Sweden, which later brought about a war with Sweden.

WLASYSLAUS IV, SON OF SIGISMUNT II, (1632-1648).

During the reign of Wladyslaus IV, clouds began to gather on the political horizon of Poland, and a war with Sweden began to loom up as an imminent possibility.

JAN KAZIMIERZ, SON WLASYSLAUS IV (1648-1668).

His reign is marked by Cossack uprising, under Chmielnicki, and the Lithuanian insurrection, under prince Janush Radzivil. The events are described in the novels of Henry Sienkiewicz: "With the Fire and Sword", "The Deluge", and "Pan Wolsdijowski."

MICHAEL KORYBUT WISNIOWIECKI, (1668-1673).

This king was a descendant of the already familiar Lithuanian duke, Korybut, or Karjebutas. He was appointed to the Polish throne because of the part his father, prince Jeremiah Wisniowiecki, played in the suppression of the Cossack uprising.

JAN III SOBIESKI, (1673-1696).

Sobieski distinguished himself as a great general. His fame became worldwide, when he saved Vienna from the Turkish grand vizier, Kara Mustafa, in a spectacular charge of the Polish cavalry.

AUGUST II, SAXONIAN, (1696-1733).

How much the Poles appreciated the rule of Sobieski can be best surmised by the appointment of a German prince, August II, of Saxony, as his successor. Under Saxonian rule decadence of Poland was accelerated, until the country found itself in the grip of chaos and anarchy, resulting from the frivolity of aristocracy.

AUGUST III, SON OF AUGUST II, (1733-1763).

The greater disorder there was in the country, the better the Poles appeared to like it; because the misrule by August II was succeeded by the misrule of August III. Stanislaus Leszcynski, who succeeded to overthrow August III, was

forced to flight, and spent the balance of his life in exile.

Under the rule of August III, foreign influences permeated Poland; and, the affairs of the country were managed from abroad. Polish policies were dictated by the neighboring powers; and, while retaining nominal independence, Poland virtually became a dependency of Russia, Prussia and Austria.

STANISLAUS AUGUST PONIATOWSKI, (1764-1795).

To end the political existence of Poland, the son of a manager of the estates of a Lithuanian prince, Sapieha of Vitebsk, was elected. He was a favorite of the Empress Ekatherina II of Russia.

Stanislaus August Poniatowski was a candidate for the Polish crown proposed by Empress Ekatherina who financed his campaign, advancing 80,000 rubles.

Anarchy, which had been rife for a long time, reached its climax in the times of Stanislaus August Poniatowski; and, as a result of foreign intrigues, the first partition of Poland took place in 1772. It was followed by second partition in 1792, and the last in 1795, which ended the political life of Poland and Lithuania, joined under the Polish crown.

EFFECT OF THE FALL OF POLAND ON LITHUANIA.

The partition of Poland, duly ratified by the Polish diets, definitely released Lithuania from the operation of various Polish-Lithuanian treaties, which bound the two nations together. Despite that fact, the Lithuanian nobility, now thoroughly Polonized, held the two nations as one, and linked the destinies of Poland with the destinies of Lithuania, in all future manifestations of national life. So, in the uprisings of 1831, and in 1863-64, Lithuanians headed the forces seeking the overthrow of the foreign yoke. This condition changed in 1864, when the masses of the people were freed from the domination of nobility, and human rights were restored.

The abolition of serfdom by Czar Alexander II, opened a new era for the Lithuanians. Whatever purpose the czar had in view, liberation of the peasantry tended to revive Lithuanian national spirit, and eventually led to the restoration of Lithuanian independence.

First of all, Lithuanian peasants began sending their children to schools. Shortly afterwards there were formed societies of Lithuanian students; and, eventually, the Lithuanian Education Society in Tilsit.

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In 1880, Lithuanian Education Society began publishing Lithuanian magazines. A struggle began between the Russian government and the Lithuanian people for the restoration of Lithuanian print and liberties. In 1904, the Lithuanians won their objectives; and, from that time on, the trend of events led to the recognition by Russia of the distinctiveness of Lithuanian nationality. After revolution of 1905, until 1914, Lithuania was represented in the Russian imperial duma, as a distinct nationality.

In 1905 the Lithuanians held a convention in Vilna, where about 1500 prominent Lithuanians from all parts of the world participated. There was founded the Lithuanian Society of Science, and the Lithuanian Society of Arts, which took charge of Lithuanian cultural and educational affairs.

In the course of 10 years, from 1904 to 1914, the Lithuanians made phenomenal progress along educational and economical lines. Illiteracy was reduced to a minimum of 35%, thus Lithuania attaining third place in the field of popular enlightenment; first place being held by Finns, second by Letts, and third, by Lithuanians.

The World War threatened the utter destruction of Lithuania; but, forgotten by the whole world, the Lithuanian nation, hardened by the experiences of the centuries, accustomed to hardships and privation, has been sustained by a determined will to live and be free. So, when the fortunes of war began to waver in 1918, out of the ruins came the voice of the Lithuanian nation: WE ARE AND SHALL BE!

The situation today is this: Most of the great powers of the world have recognized Lithuania de facto, some recognized it de jure. In the path of the future destinies of Lithuania, Poland again interposed, trying to strangle Lithuania by the occupation of its capital Vilna, and the Niemen basin, which would undermine Lithuanian vitality, and eventually force Lithuania to join Poland again. But the experience of the past stands guard. There never will be again a Union of Lublin, or any imitation thereof.

Lithuania is determined to preserve its independent national existence at all costs, and the spirit of her most glorious traditions will sustain her in all future trials.



